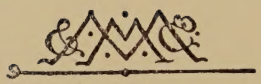
2 vols.

EARLY LIFE & LETTERS
OF
JOHN MORLEY



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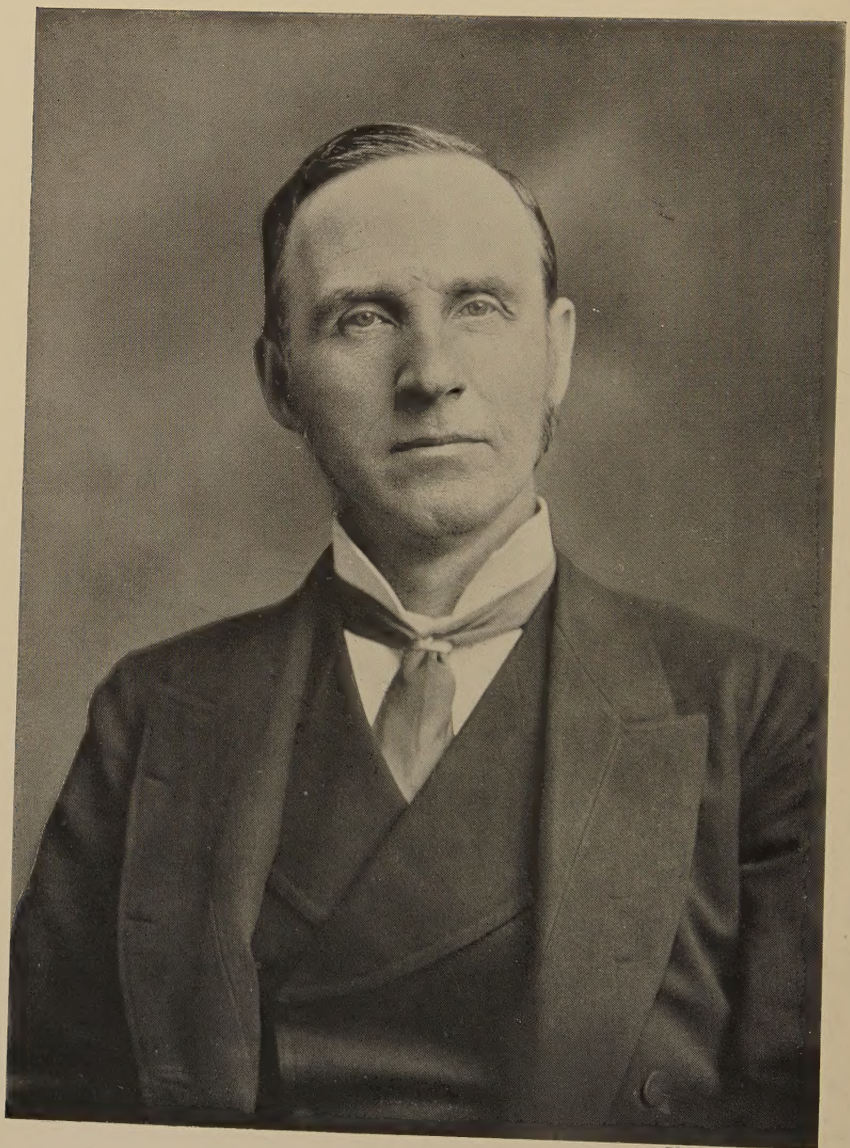

JOHN MORLEY

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EARLY LIFE & LETTERS
OF
JOHN MORLEY

BY

F. W. HIRST

IN TWO VOLS.
VOL. II

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CONTENTS

BOOK III—*continued*

CHAPTER VII

PAGE
DISESTABLISHMENT 1

CHAPTER VIII

DISRAELI'S GOVERNMENT AND POLICY . . . 24

CHAPTER IX

IMPERIALISM AND JINGOISM 37

CHAPTER X

LORD BEACONSFIELD'S DECLINE AND FALL, 1878–80 63

CHAPTER XI

EDITOR OF THE 'PALL MALL GAZETTE', 1880–1883 90

CHAPTER XII

THE TWO SPHINXES AND A VALEDICTORY—1882 . 114

BOOK IV

MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

CHAPTER I

NEWCASTLE—ITS POLITICS AND POLITICIANS . . 137

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CHAPTER II

PAGE
ELECTED FOR NEWCASTLE 153

CHAPTER III

FIRST YEAR IN PARLIAMENT 165

CHAPTER IV

THE FRANCHISE AND THE LORDS, 1884 . . . 182

CHAPTER V

DEFEAT AND RESIGNATION OF GLADSTONE . . 208

CHAPTER VI

'THE RADICAL PROGRAMME'—1885 . . . 231

CHAPTER VII

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1885 247

INDEX 279

ILLUSTRATIONS

John Morley	*Frontispiece*	
	FACING PAGE	
Frederic Harrison, 1880		28
Dr. Spence Watson		148
Joseph Chamberlain, 1880		231

BOOK III—*continued*

EDITOR AND AUTHOR

CHAPTER VII

DISESTABLISHMENT

Correspondence, 1875–1876

Morley's correspondence with Harrison, resumed in 1875, again supplies a clue to his thoughts and doings. Another migration had become necessary; Tunbridge Wells did not suit them, and anxiety about Mrs. Morley's health prompted a move to Brighton.

After the General Election of 1874, Morley devoted much thought to problems of theology and religion. We have seen how he defended empirical scepticism against a Lost Leader. His book on *Compromise*[1]—most of which had appeared in *Fortnightly* articles—was deeply concerned with religious conformity, a question involving the ethics and expediency of a State Church. Recognising that 'the struggle for National Education' must slumber for a while, he threw himself with all earnestness into a larger design for bringing about the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of England. To that end he joined the Liberation Society,

[1] *On Compromise* was published early in 1874. In a note, dated May 4, 1877, to a new edition, the author observes that some critics had judged it as if it professed to be an exhaustive treatise in casuistry, "whereas it has no pretensions to be more than an essay—opening questions, indicating points, suggesting cases, sketching outlines". Morley *On Compromise* took Mill *On Liberty* 'almost for a postulate', reprinting in an appendix "a short exposition of the doctrine of liberty, which I had occasion to make in considering Sir J. F. Stephen's vigorous attack on that doctrine".

Book III.

founded by Radicals of the old school who objected to State control of religion, just as they opposed State interference with trade. Freedom of religion was part of the general movement towards political and individual liberty. But it was something more. The Disestablishment movement, wrote Dr. R. W. Dale, " had its origin in deep religious convictions — I might almost say in fervent religious enthusiasm. Mr. Edward Miall and the men who were associated with him in founding what is now known as the Liberation Society objected to the ecclesiastical Establishment because they believed that it was altogether out of harmony with the genius of the Christian Faith. To them it seemed that the Establishment had succeeded in secularising the Church, and that it had failed in Christianising the State." [1] Dale of Birmingham was not only an able and zealous theologian but also a fine platform orator and a Radical of the new school, to whom both Chamberlain and Morley looked for counsel and support. He was if anything too fond of controversy both in his pulpit at Carr's Lane and in the political arena. " Dale ", remarked a critic, " drives in his nails so hard that he splits the wood." John Bright said he never listened to him without thinking of the Church Militant. Dale was a Congregationalist or Independent. Conspicuous also among the group, whom Morley used to meet under Chamberlain's hospitable roof, was George Dawson, a popular lecturer and earnest preacher, but of a theology so unconventional that he required an unsectarian chapel of his own. Another prominent promoter of the Disestablishment movement was H. W. Crosskey, who had helped George Dixon to organise the National Education League. With these men, and the ever-faithful Jesse Collings, Chamberlain worked for many years in Birmingham on his municipal plans and political programmes.

No better town could have been chosen for his operations; for in the 'sixties of last century Birmingham

[1] See Dale's article in the *Fortnightly Review*, March 1876.

surged with religious dissent and revolutionary radicalism. The tradition of Priestley was still alive there. It had been a centre of chartism in Chamberlain's boyhood. But long before the days of Thomas Attwood or Joseph Priestley, as far back as the Great Rebellion, royalists had set a black mark against Birmingham, or rather a red mark, as one of the towns which exhibited 'hearty, wilful, affected disloyalty' to King Charles. No wonder that Morley's more academic cast of Liberalism was enlivened and sharpened by contact with this busy factory of the new Radicalism.

Morley's decision to take up Disestablishment was announced in the *Fortnightly* of February 1874 in an article entitled 'The Liberal Eclipse'. Mr. Gladstone's retirement, he wrote, "completes the eclipse of the party of progress. When we know that the lead of the party lies between Lord Hartington and Mr. Forster, all is said." From this starting-point his argument marches by logical stages to the goal of Disestablishment. "The Church question . . . is the next page in the Liberal programme." Two years later, when John Bright endorsed the Radical programme, Disestablishment was still the political reform about which Morley cared most; and in welcoming Bright's speeches he expressed editorial regret that Disestablishment and Disendowment had not received priority in Bright's list of needful reforms. However—so he consoles himself—"Mr. Bright has now, at any rate, completed a programme and given Liberalism substance and motive. . . . Free Land, Free Church, Free Schools—the order of the procession is of little moment, provided only the procession moves."

Early in the year 1875 Frederic Harrison, hearing that Morley's resources were somewhat strained, knowing too that he was overworked and needed a real rest, made him a most generous offer—"the very kindest thing that has ever been done to me"; so Morley wrote in declining it. Several new calls, it was true, had been made on his purse; but even so, "I make more than I spend".

Book III.

In case of death he was well insured, and would leave enough to maintain his wife. On March 21 he wrote to Harrison from Tunbridge Wells :

I am just starting for a short holiday on the great continent of Europe, where I have not set foot for two years. I want a thorough change, and when I come back you will find me a changed man. A fortnight is to work the miracle, and a process of pottering about France alone. It is to be a Ramadhan or period of retreat, tempered by interviews with one or two French highnesses and mightinesses.

In the next letter he returned to Disestablishment :

Tunbridge Wells, *April* 16, 1875.—About the manual or Liberationist's Vade-Mecum. As you know, I proposed to do such a thing some time ago. Chamberlain and Illingworth are daily expecting it from me. But there is no reason why you should not write a Vade-Mecum also. In my present mood I don't feel at all like work of that kind. The mood may pass, will pass, and as the Church question is the only one I care about in politics, if or when I become political again, my ideas will return to that. My present notion—a hazy one—is that I am very likely to print my short series of papers in the *F.R.* towards the end of the year.

But his main literary occupation at this time was *Diderot*, which, as he once told me, involved more hard work and research than either *Voltaire* or *Rousseau*. When the chapters of *Diderot* began to appear in the *Fortnightly*, Harrison wrote enthusiastically : " It is a grand page of XVIIIth century work, and one, I think, never told before. You have earned him a place among the men personally known to Englishmen." [1] Towards the end of October, when his household was preparing for another migration—this time to Brighton—Morley wrote from the Athenæum to Harrison :

Tunbridge somehow has always been hateful to us—and then the leech cries, to the sea. So we are to be Brighton-

[1] The two volumes on *Diderot and the Encyclopædists* were not published until 1878.

ians. Once more I take a house, and insist that it is the last chapter of the 3rd volume, and final scene of Act 5, and that there shall we live happy ever after. The flit does not take place for a few days. Meanwhile I fulfil a long engagement—to go to Paris and Liège on business of my *F.R.* I am glad to have persuaded Chamberlain to come too. He is working himself into his grave—half I fear in a spirit of dogged indifference to the things this side thereof. But he is doing fine work meanwhile for his dingy, squalorous city.

Morley always looked back with pleasure to his continental travels with Chamberlain. This time the two friends had a long chat with Gambetta in Paris, and Morley was entertained by Lafitte. He also dined 'in state' at the Japanese Legation to celebrate the Mikado's birthday. In December he was again corresponding with Harrison about Church Disestablishment. Harrison—correctly as it proved—argued that the Liberal party could not be revived and reconstructed on the lines of the Liberation Society. He admitted that Disestablishment was the most definite and living part of the Radical movement. But it was too sectional, and most of the Liberal leaders—Gladstone, Hartington, Forster, and Lowe—abhorred it.

Morley did not agree with Harrison about the impolicy of concentrating on Disestablishment. Writing for the January (1876) *Fortnightly*, the editor declared Disestablishment to be "the one subject on which you are most certain of having a crowded meeting in any large town in England". Moreover, he saw allies of three colours joining the movement from within the Anglican Church itself—"sacramentalists weary of the Erastian bonds of Parliament and the Privy Council; evangelicals exasperated by State connivance with a Romanising reaction"; and lastly, "broad Churchmen who are beginning to see, *first*, that the laity in a free Church would hold the keys of the treasury, and would therefore be better able than they are now to secure liberality of doctrine in their clergy; *secondly*, that the

Book III.

straining to make the old bottles of rite and formulary hold the wine of new thought withers up intellectual manliness, straightforwardness, and vigorous health of conscience both in those who practise these economies and in those whom their moderation fascinates."

Again, practically all the Protestant Nonconformists were disestablishers except the Wesleyans; and even the Wesleyans, who had been neutral, were now preparing to embrace religious equality and spiritual freedom. Probably two-thirds of the Roman Catholics would vote to deprive a rival hierarchy of its artificial advantages. All the representative leaders of the working classes—MacDonald, Burke, Odger, Arch, Potter, Broadhurst, etc.—were against a State Church. Hartington and the Whigs would accept the policy, as soon as a compact and vigorous body of men had got the Liberal rank and file into line.

In short, after careful and almost Machiavellian calculations, which would have done credit to Chamberlain, he arrives at the conclusion that Disestablishment provides the best possible bond of union for the Liberal party—in other words, that the right policy will also prove to be expedient. But then—with one of his not uncommon relapses into a doubting mood—he asks whether, after all, Liberalism is more than skin-deep. "When Mr. Mill's book on *Liberty* appeared, some people said that it was superfluous. Perhaps, as the impending ecclesiastical struggles proceed, some of us will find out that that wise and noble protest was very far indeed from being superfluous." In proof thereof he cites the recent rejection at Aberdeen of a Liberal candidate, partly for being a Unitarian, partly for holding that "if people are invited into taverns to get drunk on Sunday, they ought also to be invited into picture galleries to refresh themselves on Sunday".

As Disestablishment would involve Disendowment, the Liberation Society was preparing a scheme. When it was published—so predicted the editor of the *Fort-*

nightly—many of its supporters would, like Clive, be 'aghast at their own moderation'. Meanwhile he had plenty to do. A letter of February 12, 1876, from 4 Chesham Place, Brighton, his new abode, tells us how he was then engaged: "My whole soul is absorbed in a small biography of Burke which I have been writing for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*." He was also busy with a chronicle of events for the *F.R.*, and was at work 'on Taine'—a review of France in the eighteenth century.[1] A doctor had told him that his only good habit was that of going to bed at 10 o'clock. "Brighton", he adds, "is really very likeable. Yesterday, when London was wrapped in foulness, this place was divine with sunlight. Trevelyan haunts the beach and is recovering rapidly—so much for the air."

About this time Morley went up to take part in some Disestablishment meetings in Westminster, where the Nonconformist ministers were in force. "I told them," he writes on February 16, "as my humble contribution, that so far as unbelievers went they had no more desire to turn the grave into a scene of wild declamation than other people had, and that the progress of religious thought, however it went, would make death more and more an object of reverential association. I said we were Englishmen after all, and all Englishmen have innate piety, whatever formula they profess. That was right and sound, wasn't it?" About this time Harrison proposed Morley for the Metaphysical Society, and he was elected, along with Lord Selborne, 'by acclamation' without a ballot. Its meetings were frequented by Gladstone, Cardinal Manning, and other famous men. To a letter from Harrison, who felt the fascination of Gladstone, Morley replied: "What you say of Gladstone quite accords with my own impression of him. I have only had one good talk with him, and I quite feel his attraction—his simplicity, and freedom from small egotism and

[1] This was republished in the *Miscellanies*. Taine's new book was *Les Origines de la France contemporaine*. Vol. i., *L'Ancien Régime*.

self-consciousness." He was pleased at the great honour of being chosen by the Metaphysicians, though " I hardly feel worthy ; for I care less for these abstract things than I used to do ". The Westminster meeting proved no abstraction. Harrison, arriving a few minutes late, says he found a solid mass of Liberalism jamming the door ; and feeling unequal to fighting his way in with Osborne Morgan, a fiery Welsh Liberal, went home.

One of Morley's letters to Harrison (March 22, 1876) contrasts London's leaden skies with the brilliant sunshine of Brighton. That is why he makes his visits to London as short as possible. He records walks with Henry Fawcett, whom blindness had not deterred from taking a valiant and useful part in politics. A talk with Gambetta in Paris had inspired an article, which had won that statesman's approval. He was busy too with a series on Church Disestablishment, which he intended to publish later in book form like his previous essays on National Education. To a question from Harrison asking whether he had read something by Mark Pattison in another periodical he replied testily :

> No, my dear Harrison, I've not read Pattison. I only read one Review—I would not read that unless I received six hundred pounds a year for doing it. I read three daily papers of three countries ; and five weeklies, and there my power of receptivity is at an end, so far as ephemeral literature goes.
>
> I have to give an address in October as President of the Midland Institute. It occurs to me that it would be useful to make it the occasion of a survey of journalism as a modern force.

This address was duly delivered at Birmingham ; but he changed his mind about the subject, choosing instead ' Popular Culture '.[1] At Morley's suggestion the Liberation Society was submitting its programme to Harrison

[1] It was reprinted in the *Miscellanies*.

"to have all possible legal holes driven into it and repaired". He thought of opening his series of articles at once, taking Matthew Arnold's Zion College discourse as a starting-point; but seems to have abandoned the intention. About the Liberation Society he wrote to Harrison (March 29, 1876):

I am afraid—except Crosskey—they are a weak band: vague, slow, crude. But it is our business to make the movement a public one. . . . If you ever lie awake o' nights begin to turn over in your mind how to define a *congregation*. That is a great crux. Fitzjames told me he could work that miracle—so you can do it also.

Then, turning to new books, he goes on:

Some pages of the new "Deronda" are simply hopeless: as difficult as Hegel. Yet there are many pearls. Trevelyan's book is one of the most interesting I have ever read. I sat up half the night over it on Tuesday. But Macaulay was a true Philistine—a College don type of Philistine.

BRIGHTON, *April* 11.—My church paper is very slow work. Arnold has written so unusually poor and uninteresting a paper on the other side, that it does not at all help me to get up the steam. And I am often tempted to wonder whether our stupid and beer-sodden and money-sodden nation will listen to us in this matter. Well, one must ram away at the old stone walls. There's nothing better to do that I can see at this moment. . . . Have you heard of the queer compliment paid by Carlyle to Trevelyan? He said the book was capital (as indeed it is) and would long outlive the *History*! (as indeed it will).

In later days Morley changed his opinion of Macaulay, and began to admire the *History*, while preserving his preference for Sir George Trevelyan's biography, which he used to rank next to Boswell.

Early in May Morley and Harrison were working with a committee of the Liberation Society on a legislative project for the Disestablishment of the Church. Harrison

Book III.

sent an encouraging account of his rough draft of 'the Disestablishment Act', to which Morley replied:

I am very glad you have broken ground with the Committee. . . . The difficulty of the scheme when it comes before the Churchmen will be that it is essentially a transformation of the episcopal into a congregational system. Their whole organisation, ritual, discipline, imply a bishop. How will this work with the decentralised and free congregations, to whom the scheme leaves all power? I need not say that I embrace this vital principle of congregational freedom with all my heart. But it will be hard to fit into episcopacy. I suppose they would have a synodical body of some sort, and the congregations would all affiliate themselves to it in some way and follow its general decisions as to belief and discipline.

Then he discusses further points, such as the objection to transferring so much property to the synod. The policy of 'Thorough' he puts on one side. Like Harrison, he saw many difficulties and objections. "Be sure that I am under no illusions. I see it all as you do. It is only those that live in exclusively dissenting circles, or have no opportunities for surveying our society widely in its varied strata, who can expect marvels."[1] On May 19, after attending a meeting of the Metaphysical Society, Morley again wrote to Harrison:

Brighton, *May* 19.—The Church Scheme is submitted to-day to the Executive Council of the Liberation Society. The Metaphysical interested me. As for Arthur Russell, he is just what you say, neither more nor less. The Abp. of York was better, and Gladstone eager as usual. I was rather shy, and did not make a very powerful fight for atheism: however, they seemed to be interested in the absolute nakedness of my lost soul.

In June the centenary of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* was celebrated by the Cobden Club. Harrison remarked that the speeches had not done justice to

[1] On July 5 of this year (1876) Dr. Dale wrote to a friend: "I am in despair about the Liberation Scheme."

Adam Smith as a philosopher, whom he thought comparable with Turgot and Comte. To which Morley, who was just starting to spend Sunday with Jowett 'in the holy calm of Balliol', replied, June 16:

All that you say about Adam Smith is most true—and I felt moved to say it at that absurd demonstration—but I found that I had eaten and drunken too much to say it with due force. Bagehot writes in the next *F.R.* upon Adam Smith; but he is sure to miss all your points. Somebody can assail him afterwards. Bridges has an excellent article on Vivisection —excellent. Courtney hath a plea for the cumulative vote. And I hope to adorn my pages with an essay on the Sea Green Incorruptible.

The current number he calls 'stony', and adds: "You see Chamberlain is to have his seat at Birmingham? It will be a good thing all round."

A few lines from Harrison's letter on the Adam Smith centenary may be added here:

Gladstone was the only one I thought who threw some fire and elevation into the evening. Lowe's sordid cunning came out in all its nakedness. I did not hear Courtney. Gladstone is seriously, deeply impressed with your devoutness. I quite hold that he may yet live to take up Church Liberation (from a vaguely Church point of view perhaps). I have heard many things that point to it. It is a pity that your fury against poor Knowles will prevent you from seeing what are Gladstone's wanderings of mind on things of religion.

A week or two later (June 20) came another letter, this time about a meeting of the Metaphysical Society, from which Morley was absent:

Why did you not go to the Philosophers on Tuesday?—a most pleasant party round Gladstone. There is a sweet eagerness about him which is truly affecting in a Premier. I had some talk to him myself about Diderot and Voltaire. . . . He seems as full of religious problems as if he were St. Louis captive in Egypt, and never had been king at all. His

Book III.

gentleness and fervour are truly fascinating. I have no doubt that he will live to disestablish the establishment. It is in the air, and everybody seems to expect it, when Dizzy dies. I was greatly charmed by the brilliance of Meredith. He is indeed a talker. He said, doing justice to your qualities: "That bit about Mill in that letter to you was like the light of sunset thrown across the page."

An answer came by return of post:

Brighton, *June* 21, 1876.—I am more glad than I can say that you have seen—as appears to be the case—Meredith at his best. He is indeed a wonderful talker. I am perfectly sure that he would delight to come to your house. He doesn't care for parties, and doesn't shine at his full effulgence in them. . . . Nothing very new at Oxford. I discussed our Church scheme with Jowett. He is not with us—wants reform within the Church, etc. But I like Jowett all the same. Ridley, the new Commissioner, was there: wonderfully liberal for a Conservative, and I daresay he would think us wonderfully Conservative for Liberals.

By the way—to-night I have a note from Baynes, the editor of the *Encycl. Brit.*, asking me to write the article "Comte". It rather perplexes me. I am doing my own work, and don't want to interrupt, but I should like to see Comte treated with respect in a permanent book for general readers. . . . Of course, it would only be a slight account—noting leading features—and not critical. If it were more than this, of course I should not dream of thinking myself competent.

On hearing that Harrison has taken a house near Cobham in Surrey, Morley writes (July 28):

You have fallen on delicious country, and you have a brace of poets within reach. Arnold lives at Cobham (Pains Hill Cottage), and Meredith at Box Hill. To see Meredith in the country is to see Leviathan in his bath. Pray seek him out. Arnold, I fear, will be at Fox How most of the summer.

I for my part shall be at home here—like a limpet; at least I intend to be firm until October. I am just beginning

my little article on your Master [1]—and I have other matters to follow. A good unbroken spell among my books will be better for me than anything—though the thought of the witcheries of my thrice loved Surrey now and then fills me with distraction. . . . I don't worry myself much about Herzegovina.

He had pointed the education moral in his Chronique, "but 'tis the voice of one crying in the wilderness". The great object of Liberals ought to be the permanent exclusion of Forster from power:

Our line ought to be this: Not a farthing of public money to sectarian schools, *i.e.* withdrawal of parliamentary grants. That will be the next move—but it will be 7 years hence. The Education Question is now settled for that or a longer time. Only let us now say boldly how it must be treated when (if) Radicals come to power.

Chamberlain is now keeping quiet and wary. For myself I think he ought to have spoken—but I have confidence in his tact in the House of Commons—so probably he is right. Meanwhile he is already at work in his own way.

Ld. Houghton achieved the climax of delight a fortnight ago by planting me next to the Archbishop of Canterbury at dinner, and we discoursed with much animation and cordiality under the scandalised eyes of Selborne, Cairns, Coleridge, and Forster, at the other side of the table. Selborne's look when Forster told him in a loud aside who was the Abp.'s engaging young friend tickled me hugely.

On August 2, Harrison wrote a dithyrambic tribute to Surrey, adding: "I am truly rejoiced to hear that you are to be brought out at the next election at Westminster, as Mill was. I have read your *Robespierre* and wait for number 2. . . . Your view is essentially Carlyle's, is it not, in estimate of the Sea Green." Morley wrote back from Brighton, August 3:

The sea inspires no such superb epistolary power as your heaths and fir woods, and yet I cannot let your dispatch, or

[1] *I.e.* Comte for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

dithyramb, or idyll, remain even for a day without a word of recognition. I knew your country years and years ago, when Meredith lived like a sage in a little cottage on Copsham Common, about ¾ of a mile from Claremont, and I was a lad of twenty-two. You can't tell how your picture recalls to me those far-off days; for your life has been all one piece, whereas mine has been of several; and Copsham reminds me of one of them. I envy you so delightful a nest—or at least I should envy it to anyone else. And I ask myself why in heaven I am not in such a place—I, who was made for a pastoral life, if ever man was. Meanwhile, Brighton has not been bad the last week. We have had the most royal winds —and to-day there has blown a heavy gale under a bright sky. It has really been most glorious. I have been wondering since I got your letter whether a few days of this exhilarating air would not do more for Mrs. Harrison than the stillness of the country. Don't count this treason to your fir woods. I am their advocate, and have been ever since I first was intoxicated by them.

The *Robespierre* was never meant for the likes of you—but merely to help to make the Revolution better understood by that helpless being, the general reader. If ever I dare to write the whole history, my object would be to teach our public that the Revolution was no more of a miracle than any other great event in the plain prose history of mankind. And as for the men, they were a set of poor devils—except Danton—and he was a poor devil, too, or else he would never have let Robespierre get the better of him.

Our deputation to Ld. Hartington yesterday was a marked success. Do you know the real reason why he would not go all the length with us? Because he fears Gladstone might be down upon him in debate! The effect of the proceedings was to put Forster definitely aside from the party action in this question: he knew it to be so, and was in a state of brutal rage and chagrin. I cannot tell you all about the matter now; your mind is attuned to better things; but it will go hard if some of the Whigs in Radical clothes are not pushed aside before two more years are over.

He was sceptical about the Westminster rumour, as he had heard nothing of it; but Harrison replied:

I am quite serious about Westminster. Indeed I never jest. James Beal told me in confidence that they (*i.e.* his Radical knot) had decided to run John Morley at the general election, if there was any sign of a liberal reaction. I highly encouraged the idea. . . . James Beal, though I do not altogether admire him, certainly is the wirepuller of the Westminster Radicals. He brought out Mill, and he intends to run you on the same platform. He is not a man to go into a thing without a chance. And of course he intends to find the money. I thought you were in the plot.

On August 23 Morley explained his negligence as a correspondent " by my absorption in the play of factions in thermidor, which are one of the most desperate puzzles in History ". He refers of course to his articles on Robespierre. Harrison had heard that Morley was concerned in the formation of a Radical Group or Third Party, of which doubtless Chamberlain and Dilke would be parliamentary leaders. Touching this and Westminster, Morley replied :

What you say of the Westminster plot is all new to me. I think I never spoke to J. B. in my life. In truth I've seen so much of the life behind scenes in the House of Commons during the last six weeks that I feel it is no place for me. As for the Third Party, there's very little to tell; but some of the men, Fawcett, for instance, and Mundella, have already discovered that there's a new spirit below the gangway—and very amusing are their efforts to keep themselves right. . . .

I am pressed by the *Encyc. Brit.* to give them my little piece on Comte. It seems that the *Academy* pronounces my sketch on Burke in their last volume as equal to Macaulay's little biographies. This hyperbole makes the booksellers ravenous for more, considering that Macaulay's little biographies in the *Encyclopædia* are about the most finished things he did.

This little bit of self-praise is unusual. Doubtless Morley had a good conceit of himself ; but from literary vanity—the common blight of authors—he was almost

Book III.

immune; in fact his friends often wished he would talk more about his own books and literary exploits.

Gambetta, with whom he was in close touch at this time, was coming to England "to study the Fiscal System of this happy Isle". Morley's own personal happiness was disturbed by symptoms of gout. Harrison administered consolation: "It is the statesman's weakness, and brings you nearer to Chamberlain and Chatham. *Noblesse oblige*, and squeezes the joints pretty sharp."

By the middle of September our indefatigable worker had finished his essay on Comte:

Brighton, *Sept.* 15.—I have done my scrap on your Master: an account of life and doctrine in 24 pp. of the *F.R.*!!! Of course the thing was hopeless and absurd, and I ought never to have undertaken it. I now see the incomparable merit of the Nicene Creed. You can't get Comtism into that snug space. Comte provokes me more than ever. I have read and read and meditated and re-meditated—and at the end of it my whole soul revolts—and how *you* of all men on this bright planet have gone over to such an idol doth perplex me by day and by night. The whole thing has provoked a *crise cérébrale*. All night I toss and tumble, and water my bed with my tears, and moan,—"And how does Harrison find a key to this stuff—this dreary"— No more—or we quarrel.

He had just had a letter from his 'dear friend' Lytton, now Viceroy of India, and another from Chamberlain, who was then travelling in Lapland. Chamberlain's was dated from Jockmock:

Do you know where that is? The schools of Jockmock are free, compulsory, and secular. What do you say to that in the Arctic Circle? The citizens of Quickjock are in need of artisans' dwellings, Improvement Acts, and so forth. And here I sit slaving and drudging and nursing that crossest of babies the *F.R.* while my friends are enjoying Jockmock, or loafing in Scotland, or Yachting in the Channel, or commemorating and effusing and meditating on the earth and space at Sutton Place. Tell me what I am to talk about

in my Inaugural Address at Birmingham on Oct. 5th? I designed something "super-sensible, preter-calm, and most damnably subtle" (vide *Spectator*) by way of *Écraser l'infame*.

This elicited from his friend, who was then living at Sutton Place, an epistle of 28 pages, which was inadequately stamped. Morley replied:

BRIGHTON, *Sept.* 18, 1876.—I don't in the least grudge the extra penny which I had to pay for your letter: it would be cheap at a pound. It stirs me out of profound meditations on the human race; it gives me twenty interesting things to turn over; it warms me like the best curaçoa; and by some marvel of subjective synthesis makes me pleased with myself, as if *I* had written it.

I had been turning over a book of J. Newman's. How well, how divinely well, he writes. It came into my head that you will write in his best vein, and better, when you have purged your soul of a certain remnant of drossy fire, as you are doing with a rapidity too marked to escape my eagle eye. There is something about Papistry—and you are a Papist—with a slight crotchet or two—which lends a certain ease, comprehensiveness, width of reference, to writing. And then you are both mystics, and both sentimentalists—and what a help is that to style, Milton and Burke to the contrary notwithstanding.

It was his interest in National Education and Disestablishment, as we have seen, that brought Morley into touch with Chamberlain and the Radical Dissenters. Under their influence the *Fortnightly* became less academic and more concerned with the personal side of politics. In 1876 we find some pen portraits of prominent men which are far from flattering. In February Sir William Harcourt, adopting the rôle of a loyal party man, had made speeches—to quote the editorial account of them—"warning people with political ideas and reasoned principles that they are the nuisances of public life". Harcourt's arrows were no doubt shot at the *Fortnightly*, which replied with interest. The ex-Solicitor-General

Book III.

was pushing too far the maxim ' dès qu'on veut accaparer les hommes un peu de charlatanisme ne nuit pas '. He was an imitator, but an unsuccessful imitator, of Disraeli :

> The moral flavour of Sir William Harcourt's speeches is to the flavour of Mr. Disraeli's what petroleum champagne is to Tokay. The contrast is as shocking as if one should place the delicate, the quaint, the whimsical mosaic of the Roman jeweller by the side of the staring brilliants of the Lowther Arcade. . . . Sir William Harcourt's hectoring expostulation with a few plain men who try to interest provincial people in serious politics, as distinguished from the game of battledore and shuttlecock among placemen and partisans in London, is a diverting instance of the absurd presumption which seizes even shrewd men who are once thoroughly imbued by the House of Commons' tone. What is all this talk about the liberal army and loyalty and party discipline ? We have taken no shilling and sworn no oath. Where there is discordancy of sentiment, what avails the circumstance of bearing the same party nickname ? It is the sentiment and not the nickname, that defines political obligation. A man's party consists of those who agree with him. The important thing for us is not to restore the last government, but to prevent party distinctions from becoming as meaningless as the distinctions between Democrats and Republicans have been more than once in the United States, to the egregious deterioration of all public life in that country whenever it has happened. The battle is for causes, not for persons ; for elevation of the national life, not for promoting the claims of individuals to office.

All this is spirited enough ; but the uncompromising journalist under Chamberlain's influence is becoming more of a politician, and less inclined to exclude weak-kneed members from the Tabernacle. After the session, in September 1876, a survey of ' the state of liberalism among the Olympians of the front bench ' concludes with a quite cheerful diagnosis :

> Lord Hartington is with us in the matter of education, and is not against us as to Disestablishment ; but he is

averse to a further extension of the franchise. Mr. Forster is a reactionist and the great buttress of reactionary ideas about national education; but he is a liberal as to the franchise and probably as to the land, while he has never committed himself against Disestablishment. Mr. Lowe, we are sorry to say, is cold to all the subjects we have named, but would work heartily for law reform, and any changes in the direction of more scientific administration—both of them matters of immense importance, and matters on which there is room for the most valuable improvements. Of Mr. Gladstone who can speak?

In the closing days of the session Morley had taken part in a strong deputation to Lord Hartington for the purpose of insisting that the public must be represented on the managing bodies of all educational institutions which received public money. The deputation left the Liberal leader well satisfied, and after this interview the *Fortnightly* saw 'nothing to be gained by a breach with the Whigs'. After all, it reflected, the true Whig doctrine is that the legislature should carry out what the country wishes. The business of the sixty or seventy Radical Members of Parliament working together, instead of each pursuing his separate fad, was to convert the country and the Whigs to their views.

Another portrait of a greater actor than Harcourt was prompted by the transformation of Disraeli into the Earl of Beaconsfield. The last commoner as head of an administration to receive an earldom was the elder Pitt. From Disraeli taste in decoration was not to be expected, but Burke's biographer found it intolerable that he should have chosen Beaconsfield, the residence of Edmund Burke, who died when "the patent was actually in course of preparation, raising him to the peerage as Lord Beaconsfield". To think that "the man who entered life as the bravo of the Protectionists" should trick himself out as successor in title to the author of the *Thoughts on Scarcity*!

It is in the law of things that the wicked shall flourish as the green bay tree; but why should the man, whose last words in the House of Commons were a plea for the authors of massacre and oppression in Turkey, try to associate his name with the memory of the man who gave fourteen of the best years of his life to punish the oppressor of the natives in India?

Disraeli might have replied that Burke's title was to have been conferred upon him by George the Third for allying himself with Toryism. But it is clear from the abusive nicknames showered upon Disraeli's head that our republican was enraged by this insult to the shade of Burke. He calls the new Earl a great parliamentary mime, the incarnation of irony, solemn *farceur*, Mephistopheles; dwells on his 'swift, ghastly glimpses into the hollowness of things', his subtle art in varnishing his own motives and tarnishing those of other people, and 'his superb contempts'. But the "sublime mocker" had mocked himself by taking "the very title of all others that is best fitted to shrivel up his pretensions, if the English world only knew what it ought to know of its greatest men". For where could there be found a stronger contrast than that of Disraeli's epigrams and flashy phrases with the lofty spirit, weighty judgment, magnanimous aims and imperial understanding of Burke? [1]

In the late 'sixties Morley had made the acquaintance of Leonard Courtney, then one of the principal leader-writers of the *Times*. When Courtney entered Parliament as member for Liskeard (in 1877) he soon became an independent force, and pressed his views in many fields of controversy with uncompromising vigour and sincerity. On one subject Courtney and Chamberlain were sharply divided; and Morley, after wavering a little, came down on the side of Chamberlain. Chamberlain, believing in the rule of majorities, was all for the

[1] See the *Fortnightly Review*, September 1876.

single member constituency, and organised the National Liberal Federation—the Birmingham Caucus—in the hope of forcing his Radical Programme on Liberal candidates. Courtney hated the machine politician and the machinery which was to produce party conformity. He wanted an electoral system which should yield as many independent members as possible. With this view he associated Mill's plea for minority representation and supported Hare's scheme, the cumulative vote, and other devices. In an article on Political Machinery which appeared in the *Fortnightly* of June 1876, he expressed his belief that by the adoption of Hare's plan they would remove some of the evils of the party system under which 'the best candidate is the man who is not troubled with thoughts of anything beyond the programme of his party'. The party system with one-member constituencies and majority members tended, he thought, to make the House of Commons a Chamber of Mediocrities, and to prevent men of independent views, whose votes might be an inconvenient and disturbing factor in the Lobby, from becoming Members of Parliament. To those who preferred a system under which governments with a well-disciplined majority are capable of carrying legislative measures in accordance with the party programme, Courtney replied: "I am prepared to uphold the paradox that the most important function of the House of Commons is not that of legislation but of discussion." Morley was impressed but not convinced. "Your article interests me enormously," he wrote, on receiving it, "though my mind halts this side of your conclusion." He hopes to examine the argument in print before many weeks are over, and is not yet quite sure of the exact point at which his views will diverge. "You make the plan more persuasive than usual, partly because you write like a practical politician, which Mill and Hare do not." Though Morley was often called a doctrinaire—as indeed he was in the best sense of the word—he took care always to keep in close touch

Book III.

with the practical politician. He believed in office and responsibility; thought of the House of Commons as a governing assembly; and, even after the emergence of three parties, maintained his preference for the one-member constituency, thinking that it is more important to have a strong government than to make the House of Commons a perfectly correct mirror of public opinion. For a democrat he had a curious dislike of the argument that there is no mandate for this or that measure after a general election has put a party in office. The two friends, however, held many views in common. On the last day of December, writing from Brighton, Morley invited Courtney to dinner at the St. James's Hotel, promising to secure "at least two others to lighten up my personal dullness". "Or would you rather come down here for a Saturday to Monday?" "I have been abroad", he added, "for my first scamper in Italy. I wish I had sold my books ten years ago to raise the money for the expedition then. Italy sets all one's history in a new perspective—to say nothing of the delight of its landscapes and its art." He was preparing an address for delivery to some Lodges of the Miners' Association at Hanley on January 8. "I believe you will agree with four-fifths of what I mean to say." Courtney had won Liskeard without the aid of Hare's system. Morley attributed his friend's success 'to personal influence rather than to any spontaneous swing of opinion'. A few days later, on January 3, 1877, the dinner was settled. Huxley and Matthew Arnold had agreed to help the host 'as spiritual powers in keeping you and some other legislator, as temporal powers, in your places'. The Hanley address, he adds, "will, I think, not set me in the way for pleasing the Political Economy Club. Its point is that every word spoken by political economy on wages is either untrue or else nugatory. Only I must find some plainer word than nugatory for those homely souls."

The address was duly delivered, and was published in the *Fortnightly Review* for March 1877. It abounds in

sympathy and encouragement for the workers and their Trade Unions. A reminder that head work is sometimes as hard and exhausting as hand labour brings us to a sentence that is still worth recalling: "Ideas and right expressions are often as difficult to get and to deal with as coal and ironstone; and the scholar, as he shuts up his book, and puts out his lamp, many a time knows a weariness of body and a heaviness of spirit which equal anything known to you as you trudge home of a night from the pit mouth."

Not that he wished to confuse or identify two lines so different as those of miner and scholar. But it was good that they should see and hear as much as possible of each other. In sending for a man of books and a disinterested observer of events they had given their answer to 'those preposterous alarmists' who kept warning the public that Trade Unions would drive all educated men out of public life and hand over exclusive influence to furious demagogues. This is the keynote of a long address which students of Trade Union history and of liberal opinion about labour fifty years ago will find well worth perusal.

CHAPTER VIII

DISRAELI'S GOVERNMENT AND POLICY

In 1874, when Gladstone was deposed from office, and Disraeli ruled in his stead, Morley saw that the question of National Education had been put to bed, and would sleep for years where Forster's Education Act left it, unless some reactionary measure were introduced by the new Conservative Administration. But it seemed to him that the time was ripe, or nearly ripe, for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of England. Chamberlain, the rising chieftain of the new Radicalism, concurred, but insisted, as we have seen, on a 'quadrilateral' of reforms, which might unite the landless labourer and the trade unionist with dissenters and secularists. Mr. George Trevelyan, heading another group of Radicals, was pressing for the enfranchisement of the rural labourer, and before long Chamberlain, Dilke, and Morley found it expedient to add this plank to their platform. In December 1875 the National Reform Union promoted a meeting in Manchester, at which Morley was the principal speaker. A resolution was carried demanding the franchise for agricultural labourers. In accepting it Morley took occasion to dissent from the proposition, popularised by Mr. Trevelyan, that 'the lowering of the County Franchise is the keystone of Liberal Policy'. In the *Fortnightly* (January 1876) he went so far as to describe changes in electoral machinery as comparatively 'thin and unfruitful' topics, and went on :

Let us reform our electoral machinery by all means, but let us understand and make others understand that we only seek this because we seek something else—the Disestablishment of the Episcopal Church in England, the reinvigoration of local public life both in town and country by the attribution of higher functions to local public bodies, the emancipation of the land from artificial restrictions, the erection of a system of gratuitous primary instruction. There is no disorder, no confiscation, no revolution in all this : it is the line of passage from sentimental Radicalism to Scientific Liberalism.

But Disraeli was too crafty to play into the hands of sentimental Radicals or scientific Liberals. After using part of the surplus left by Mr. Gladstone to reduce the Income-Tax from threepence to twopence in the pound, he turned public attention to public health, fitting wit to wisdom in the clever parody ' *Sanitas Sanitatum omnia Sanitas* '. The Public Health Act of 1875, an admirable measure, and an Artisans' Dwellings Act excited warm approval from Chamberlain, who at the same time, with the backing of the *Fortnightly*, reproached official Liberalism, now under Hartington's leadership, with apathy towards local government and social problems.

Unfortunately for tranquillity at home and peace abroad, clouds were gathering in the Balkans. In 1875 an insurrection broke out among the downtrodden Christian subjects of Turkey in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Turkish problem, after slumbering for twenty years, was rising up again ; and the Pro-Turkish sympathies of Disraeli—founded on the favourable treatment accorded to the Jews in Turkey and their persecution in Russia—soon led him into a foreign policy which would put all domestic controversies into the shade, draw Gladstone like Achilles from his tent, and divert the energies of English Radicals from their programme of domestic reforms into a crusade on behalf of the oppressed Christians of Turkey in Europe. The Bosnian insurgents had from the first the sympathy and secret support not

50565
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only of their Servian and Montenegrin neighbours, but also of Holy Russia, Protector of the Orthodox Church and champion of all Slav nationalities. The Austrian Government became nervous, and Count Andrassy induced the Powers to bring pressure to bear upon the Porte by a collective note, prescribing reforms which might have saved the situation. But an outbreak of Moslem fanaticism in Constantinople followed the Andrassy note, and disturbances in the Turkish province of Bulgaria provoked a hideous massacre. When reports of these Bulgarian atrocities were published in the *Daily News*, Disraeli ridiculed them as the ' irresponsible babble of coffee-house politicians '. But they proved true. Popular feeling was stirred. In September 1876 Gladstone took the field with a great speech at Blackheath, and issued his famous pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, which proclaimed the policy of clearing the Turkish Pashas ' bag and baggage ' out of Bulgaria, ' the province they desolated and profaned '. This pamphlet spread like wild-fire, and roused the conscience of England. But a majority of the aristocratic and governing classes still clung to the traditional view that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire should be maintained. The Turk was a gentleman, and the City had financial and commercial interests in Constantinople. Disraeli hesitated for a time. He supported the Andrassy note ; but in the end he declined to join the Concert of Europe in coercing Turkey. In May 1876, when the three Emperors drew up the so-called Berlin Memorandum, demanding an armistice in Bosnia and Herzegovina with immediate reforms, Disraeli refused his assent, though France and Italy agreed. The British Fleet was despatched to Besika Bay, and our Government announced that there must be no territorial changes in the East of Europe without its consent. This policy proved fatal alike to peace and to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Had England accepted the Berlin Memorandum, it seems probable that the Porte would

have yielded; and many bloody chapters of European history, ending in the frightful agony of 1914 to 1918 (following another Balkan war and a Bosnian tragedy), might never have been written. The next move came in July 1876, when Servia and Montenegro declared war on Turkey. They were of course no match for the Turks; but they calculated, correctly, as it turned out, on aid from Russia.

The editor of the *Fortnightly* watched the unfolding of this drama with increasing apprehension. At first he was inclined to neglect as mere local disturbances the unrest in Bosnia. But he quickly realised the danger, and urged that England should support the Concert and withdraw from Turkey a sympathy which only encouraged her along the road to ruin, and brought about the very contingencies which it was designed to prevent. He saw, too, very clearly how disastrous British intervention in another Turkish war must be to the reforms on which he had set his heart. The Franco-German War had been his first lesson in Cobdenism. This was the second. It imprinted itself on his mind, and coloured his political opinions to the end.

We are able to trace Morley's views through his editorial notes on 'Home and Foreign Affairs', which conclude each number of the *Fortnightly* at this period. It is plain that he made a very careful study of the whole intricate problem from the standpoints of international duty and national interests. Now and again his criticism is enlivened by a pungent sentence; as when in May 1876 Disraeli's system of government is summed up as 'square-toed humdrum, disguised by blazes of indiscretion'.

In the earlier stages of the crisis Morley urged that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be united to Dalmatia, or that at least Austria should be entrusted with the task of reforming Turkish administration in those provinces. Austrian administration, as he foresaw, would free the Rayahs without exposing the Mussulmans to

their vengeance. In February 1876 he admires 'the admirable patience' of Austrian diplomacy in trying to untie the Gordian knot which nobody dared to cut. In England, he remarks, everybody had come to admit the wisdom of British abstention from the continental wars of 1864, 1866, and 1870. Yet at the time many voices were raised for intervention. There was now a danger that the Crimean blunder might be repeated. "A Minister in search of something to revive his waning popularity has nothing to do but to intervene with a great bustle in foreign affairs, however miserable a blunder such intervention might happen to be."

By September 1876 it was pretty clear that the Servians would be crushed, unless Russia came to their rescue. English Liberals and Radicals were divided between sympathy for the Christian populations of Turkey and fear of a European conflagration.

Harrison was rather definitely opposed to anything like a religious crusade against the Crescent, though he saw that European Turkey must be reorganised and reformed. Morley was inclined to agree. But he desired collective intervention to ensure "the successive emancipation of the Slav populations, who are now kept in poverty and abasement by the blind and hateful domination of the Turks". Though he did not believe that Russia meant to seize Constantinople, he thought that Great Britain should steer a middle course, and to that end had been helping Grant Duff to prepare a letter on the Turkish Question, which they sent to Delane for insertion in the *Times*. After telling Harrison about this, he adds: "It was also laid before Gladstone, who at first was tremendously struck, but I suppose he threw it up. It has fallen very flat. On the whole, I believe I am exactly where you are about Turkey, and you will find your ideas in the next Chronique."

Though his *Robespierre* showed no sign of staleness, Morley needed a rest, and Harrison, writing from Sutton

Photo. Barraud.

FREDERIC HARRISON, 1880

Place, September 17, urged him to spend the winter in Italy, adding :

I must tell you how very highly I rate your last piece on *Robespierre*. It seems to me quite a perfect bit of history, as interesting as Carlyle, and yet with the true view, which the old boy certainly had not. But why not write the whole Revolution ?

I am anxious to know what you are to do *in re* Turkey. I should be sorry if you fall into the mere *Spectator* vein—or encourage the silly Christian cry of " down with the beastly Turk ". I need not say that I sympathise with the noble outburst of feeling we have witnessed at the recent atrocities, and the *spirit* of Gladstone's appeal is warming and satisfying, though he said some very hasty and dreadful things. But I agree that the brutalities of the modern Turkish warfare can no longer be seen unmoved, and that a new page has been turned for our Eastern policy. Dizzy, Lord Derby, and Eliot ought all to be summarily dismissed, as having disgraced our country by their tone. But withal I agree with those who still say that the embroilment of the world is such, and the selfishness and villainy of all national policies so general, that it would be worse than the disease simply to stir up the bloody mud and abet an universal turmoil. I believe a statesman could yet give temporary rest to Eastern Europe, and permanent protection to the wretched Christians of Turkey, without a Crusade, and without planting Russia at Constantinople.

Harrison therefore advised the editor of the *Fortnightly* not to commit himself to " a mere policy of anti-Turk Crusade ". Within the last hundred years the Russians had behaved just as ill, and the Montenegrins would do the same now. Morley went further with Gladstone than Harrison ; but he was never a Crusader.

That savagery in the Balkans is no monopoly of the Turks and Moslems has been proved pretty often in the last fifty years ; and many a Pro-Greek, Pro-Serb, or Pro-Bulgar will now admit that there was much to be said even in the 'seventies for the moderating temper of the *Fortnightly Review*.

To Harrison's suggestion of a winter in Italy, Morley replied: "You are very kind in your solicitudes about my leisure. I see it all—feel it all—and I thought at the time that Ruskin was quite right to have his £200 in an outing. But I haven't got £200: I won't borrow it, I can't beg it, and if I steal it, the scandal would damage the Comtists, of whom it seems I am certainly one, if the papers tell true." As to the Christian subjects of Turkey, "why don't you write about the whole movement for my November number? Do. Freeman is to thunder in October. He has rather lost his head, I judge." [1]

After the address on Popular Culture at Birmingham, which went off very well, the weary editor-lecturer-author prepared for "a short outing"—so he wrote (October 13, 1875)—"to Weissnichtwo in France, Germany, or Italy":

> I hate going, but my leach says if I don't go, and that without standing on the order of my going, I shall break down without any long respite. So on Sunday night, or Monday morning, we start—perhaps for Florence—and if I get to Florence, I shall surely see Rome, if only for two days. . . . The address was a success in all ways. The Town Hall was filled (not crowded, I don't mean, as when Bright speaks; but all the seats were taken—1600 or 1700) and I got on very well, without a single note—which was a feat in a small, and not very useful way.

A split had occurred among Comte's disciples. Congreve and Lafitte had taken up the cudgels for Turkey, and were for maintaining Ottoman rule in Europe. Harrison, Beesly, and Bridges felt that this meant the perpetuation of chaos, and that 'no people ought to be condemned to it'. Yet Harrison could not share Freeman's 'crusading bluster', foreseeing the danger of more massacres and of a general European war. The editor

[1] Freeman was the chief anti-Turk writer of the *Fortnightly*—on the other side Congreve and Harrison.

again pressed him to write for the *Review*, ending—after a delicate allusion to the Comtist Church schism—" And may the Great Being have you in his (or its, or her) holy keeping ". The next letter is from the Holy City :

ROME, 7 A.M., *via* Boccadi Leone, *Oct.* 28.—My dear Harrison—I have a fancy that my first word from Rome should be to you, who have talked to me about it as no one else does, and kindled my ardent desire to be here—ever since our walks at Dieppe, do you remember, about 80 years ago. We arrived last night just before five o'clock from Florence. The sun was going down behind a bank of sombre cloud ; the moon hanging pale in the fading blue of the sky ; the mist rose like a ghost's shroud over the Campagna—and there she lay " lone mother of dead empires "—oh, it was like some low and appalling organ dirge. To find one's self rattling down the Viminalis in an omnibus was a rude awakening, and then, half an hour later, it was ruder to be planted next to two unwise and vulgar countrywomen babbling about spiritualism.

We travelled straight from London to Turin through the Mont Cenis : stayed a night in Turin, a night in Bologna ; and then to Florence, where we have been for nine days—days of supreme delight. We went to a quiet little hotel near the Cascine—and took sight-seeing very easily, unlike one heroic American lady at the table d'hôte who had dashed through the Uffizi, Pitti, and twenty-five churches in seven hours, knocking up three cab-horses in the process. Consistently with your advice I have not written any important book since leaving home. The pictures were a great revelation to me—but I could ill stand a cross-examination by poor Colvin. I thought, and still think, the best plan is to see and attend to about six or four pictures in a day, and wholly ignore the rest. The prospects about Florence ravished my senses ; never was anything so infinitely lovely, and so varied. In the evening I read Machiavel's *History of Florence*, and bits of Dante, and bits of Byron ; and, by the way, I have never felt Byron so great and magnificent a genius as since I crossed the Alps. The fourth canto is as great as Milton, and in some ways greater. I know *you* won't

Book III.

think this a mere outburst of excitement: at Rome one feels it to be literally true.

The old streets of Florence filled my mind as much as pictures or anything else. To see the market-folk eating their dinner of bread and green figs: the flowers and pomegranate plants for sale on the rugged bases of the palaces: then a ghastly procession of masked frati della Misericordia; then a mendicant friar collecting the centesimi of the poor devils of market women, while I thirsted for power to commit the rascal to gaol for 3 months as a rogue and vagabond under the Act—it was all wonderful and the opening of new worlds. My brain is like a plant in rain, after a parching drought. When I look back upon my condition a fortnight ago, it seems a dreary nightmare.

And now no more. I am going for my first solitary walk up to the Capitol. I seem to know Roman topography like that of London—so much has it been before me for months. The weather is divine; at Florence it was rather too warm. Forgive the egoism of this scrap. I would give much if you two were here—much—much.

Harrison was delighted with the Rome letter; and we may be allowed a few sentences from his lively rejoinder:

London, *Nov.* 10, 1876.—Your life is ever after a different thing after seeing Rome than it was before. One feels, *vixi*,—you may suffer, die, starve, what not, but one of the great purposes for which one came into the world has been fulfilled. Things grow clearer, group themselves better, the busy struggles of this petty Island seem smaller. Even the Birmingham School League and the Liberation Society pale their wonted fires—*pulveris exigui jactu*, etc. *Exigui*—no, that is not the word. The dust of the Campagna is mighty, potent like the dust thrown up by some Eastern necromancer, out of which great shapes rise. The small fussy things of life cease to vex, a truer balance of soul comes down, and one goes down to the path of old age with a firmer and statelier step—the 25th clause ceases from troubling, the member for Birmingham becomes an ordinary (though most capable) M.P.; Freeman and his row about some Anglican scuffle

makes one smile instead of groan; the Church of England gets to look like a cork model of St. Peter's under a glass case, rather curious, a meritorious piece of industry; Morris and his blue pots and dried seaweed wallpapers becomes an upholsterer, not a Prophet of High Art, and Swinburne's squeals sound shrill after the owls in the Amphitheatre.

When Harrison's article on Turkey appeared in MS. the editor found it, after all, very near to Congreve's view, and too Pro-Turkish for his own taste. He deprecated also any introduction of the *odium theologicum* into "the most serious crisis that has affected international relations in your time". So he wrote, November 21, from Brighton: "I want to see no fight. The issues are too complex to be settled by the hammer-and-tong kind of controversy, which is only fit for such speculative trifles as the existence of a deity and the like." He hoped that Harrison would forgo an attack he was meditating on Freeman's view of history.

In some important respects he is inculcating the very view which you share. For instance, it is a service of profound value to press, as he does, in season and out of season, and with incessant variety of illustration, the unity of history. Again, he is with you—tho' using a dialect of his own — in asserting the supremacy of morals in politics: witness his complaints of Mommsen. Next, his feeling that institutions and government and economic ordering ought to be the main objects of interest with students, and are the real forces for good and evil, is a nearer approach than any previous scholar has made in England to wide social conception as something more than a phrase. Next, he has been most useful in protesting against the detachment of art—the only art which he deals with—architecture—from the social conditions of the men who raise the monuments of art. And so on. I am keenly alive to his shortcomings. They provoke me as much as they provoke you. But on the whole, he has done and is doing all but the very greatest services to history in its best sense.

In his Eastern policy Morley was steering a difficult

course with skill and real courage. In the November number he wrote :

> If the Government had shared the sympathies of the nation and had made the safety and welfare of the Christians a prominent object of their policy from the first, they would have found themselves in accord with Russia and might have checked any idea of selfish aggrandisement on her part.

Then came (on November 9) Disraeli's menacing speech at the Guildhall. John Bright dismissed it too contemptuously as " rodomontade and balderdash ". Morley took it seriously—an ' odious blowing of the war trumpet '. British public opinion, he thought, would stand aside for Russia to do her best for the oppressed Christians of Turkey. But she must not occupy Constantinople. British policy had been all wrong : " From the day of the unexplained and misunderstood despatch of the fleet to Besika Bay down to the day of Lord Beaconsfield's infamous speech at the Guildhall the Turks have been encouraged to rely on England in the last resort and to resist one by one the demands of Russia."

He accepted Harrison's ' Cross and Crescent ' article, but asked him to omit a derogatory remark about Dissenters and some other passages which would offend religious people. On the whole, he found it on a second reading more to his mind than he had at first thought. " The picture of the Czar is admirable." Happily, the contributor proved more amenable than usual to the editorial blue pencil, and the next letter is a grateful acknowledgment, peppered with irony :

> Brighton, *Nov.* 23.—Thank you, my dear Harrison, for your pleasant compliance with my doings and petitions. 'Tis for your own good, I am sure—and for the good of truth —and especially for the good of the Conservative aspects of Positivism. I'm not going to have you turning up the whites of your eyes and singing sanctimonious psalms in the *Contemporary*, and then coming over to blow up my poor

house about my ears with your sulphurous blasphemies. I'm going to have a Conservative aspect too—looking south, with a warm sun, and high profits and quick returns, and laurels.

My heart is hot within me at that Hebrew devil. The whole talk about Russia is a wicked immoral craze—but we shall best Dizzy yet. There will be no war from us. There will be a renewal of meetings on the strength of the Guildhall villainy, and Dizzy will again be thrust back—may God eternally confound him. In the *Times* to-morrow he will say he did not know of Loftus's telegram. But his lies won't save him. The nation will know that it is a lie—will tell him that it is sick of his lies, the battered creature—But *basra* ! I'll print this, I think, as a moderate man's view of the situation.

One more letter belongs to this year :

BRIGHTON, *Dec.* 3, 1876.—My dear Harrison—Your long letter ought not to have remained so long unanswered. This is the 15th I write to-day : the post is merciless : I have written to an American admirer thanking him for a barrel of apples : to a young English artist who wishes to swear an eternal friendship with me on the strength of my Address ; to 6 recalcitrant, tiresome, fastidious, treaty-breaking contributors, to a careless clerk, to an invitation to address a Miners' Union in the Potteries ; to an anxious mother, who wants to bring up her children to make the best of both worlds, without violating the maxims of *Compromise* ; to R. Lowe, thanking him for promise of an article, etc. etc. etc. Enough. Now for a quiet chat of ten minutes with a friend —without object or aim or pretence to be *suivi.*

You don't, I see, go in for the Conference. No more do I. The more public meetings of constituencies on the general question of War or No War, the better. I am all for them. But a convention of doctrinaires to untie such a knot as the administration of ten revolted provinces won't do any good, and I'm like Lord Derby—I won't put my name to things that I don't expect to work. However, it will be an interesting sight to see *Mind* in such force. The only peril is lest the gross public should be too afraid of agreeing with

the class (you and I are of it, though we don't like it) whom in its heart the said gross public despises. And no wonder, when one reads Carlyle's letter. I am anti-Turk, but I cannot stand this puffery of the Russians. By the way, your Comte has said some kind things of Nicholas—how right he was to keep out liberal books, eh? Do you remember? Don't forget. Shall I send you the reference? . . .

When I remember how Lord Salisbury used to wait years ago along with the rest of us poor devils in Cook's ante-room at the Albany, eager for books to review, impostors to mangle, guineas to earn—and think of the prodigious office he now holds, my imagination is struck. But is it possible that he or any one else should prevent war? Surely not. Well, if he does his work he will at least depose Dizzy and put aside dull Derby. Lytton declares that Ld. S. is the most delightful chief to serve under that ever a man had—and Mallet says the same. . . . Bright is in a most truculent humour.

This had indeed been a hard and busy year. Apart from all his other tasks, Morley had contrived to edit and publish (in November) another volume of *Miscellanies*. Politically, his work for the Liberation Society had been wasted. The Eastern Question was driving religious politics into a new channel. The Liberal Party was divided into Crusaders and Moderates. But when Jingoism rallied to Disraeli, the main stream of Liberal opinion began to run more and more strongly with Gladstone, heroic champion of Christian Liberties in Europe.

CHAPTER IX

IMPERIALISM AND JINGOISM

1876–1878

DISRAELI'S Oriental Imperialism, far more theatrical and picturesque, but far less expensive, than some later varieties, had vaunted itself during the session of 1876 in the purchase of 176,000 Suez Canal shares from the Khedive of Egypt, and in the Royal Titles Bill, which conferred on the Queen the title of Empress of India. Morley thought the purchase a legitimate one for the greatest commercial and maritime nation of the world, whose only interest in the Canal would be to improve it and to cheapen the dues. But a year after the deal, when he saw how likely it was to be made the pretext for aggressive designs in various directions, he changed his mind. "It becomes ominous," he wrote, "if it is to be taken for a hint, that under certain conditions England will seize Egypt as her share in the partition of the Ottoman Empire." He saw that England in Egypt would mean trouble with France.

All sections of the Liberal Party were united against the Royal Titles Bill, and Morley's editorial observations upon it in April 1876 are probably the strongest of all his published writings against monarchical institutions. The new title of Empress he thought an 'ill-sounding word', though it pleased 'the people of the Court Circular, who may be credited with an honest Oriental delight in self-prostration'. As for the 'boundless loyalty' about

Book III.

which the newspapers 'rave', it was 'not to be taken seriously'. The common people are fond of pageants, but there is among them no 'abject sentiment' nor even much of 'true imaginative loyalty'. He talks in Positivist style of "the social demoralisations which are inevitably bound up with a hereditary monarchy that has survived into an industrial society". His correspondence leaves no doubt that he shared the republican sentiments of Dilke, Chamberlain, Cowen, and others of the Radical school. But oddly enough militarism, which he afterwards regarded as one of the worst ingredients in imperialism, was not at this moment an object of attack. Indeed, for a few months in 1876 and 1877 he flirted with the idea of universal military training, impressed, it would seem, by writers on strategy who were just then conjuring up the bogy of invasion, and also by the theory, at first sight so plausible, that it would be a cure for Chauvinism.

A detailed study of English political psychology from 1876 to 1878, taking Morley's monthly notes as a guide, would provide the philosopher of war and peace with an instructive volume. It would help to explain how imperialism, when it becomes the policy of a government, may cause a popular explosion of Jingoism, and how a spirited foreign policy, if it does not end in the calamity of war, may fail in its avowed purposes, fall flat, and discredit the Ministers who initiated it.

Public opinion during the long-drawn Turkish crisis exhibited frequent and perplexing fluctuations. After the Bulgarian massacres in the autumn of 1876, Gladstone could probably have carried the country with him in his 'bag and baggage' policy. But when Russia began to move, a strong breeze of anti-Russian feeling set in, and Beaconsfield spread his sails to catch it. At the Guildhall Banquet on November 9, 1876, he had used words which were obviously intended either as a threat of war or as a sop to the Jingoes: "Though the policy of England is peace, there is no country so well

prepared for war as our own. If England enters into conflict in a righteous cause her resources are inexhaustible." The Guildhall speech, while it stirred up the Jingoism of what Morley called 'our unwise little war party in England', also turned the current of Liberal opinion more definitely towards Gladstone. In December—to judge from a great conference in London and other indications—public opinion was still for ending misrule in the Turkish provinces, even at the cost of a Russian advance and of Russian aggrandisement. The *Fortnightly* agreed with John Bright that Russia was over-extended, and that an acquisition of more territory, even of Constantinople, would only weaken her. The Pro-Turks were in a small minority. Beaconsfield's more 'respectable colleagues' had not echoed his reckless talk. The 'real mind' of the constituencies would support Russia in demanding a decent and humane government for Turkish subjects of the Slav race, secured by solid and stringent guarantees. But Morley did not think the purely negative policy of Bright could be adopted by the Liberal Party, of which he now proposed that Gladstone should assume the leadership. He put in a plea for a more stable and instructed diplomacy in accord with British interests. It has often been said, he wrote in January 1877, that it is impossible for a country governed by popular constituencies, where a shifting popular chamber insists on controlling the executive, to have a settled system of alliances, or a long-sighted foreign policy.

In the sense of a formal system embodied in old-fashioned treaties, this is undeniably true. But in the sense of a definite conception of the general and continuous drift of our interests, there can be no reason why the leaders of opinion in the press and elsewhere should not keep the constituencies firm and straight over a long period of time. The task may be difficult, and just because it is so, England ought to hold as fast as she rightly can to non-intervention. But non-intervention tempered by a close, friendly under-

standing with Germany is not impossible, nor is it a contradiction in terms. The alternative, which is intervention by zigzags, is pure mischief.

Lord Derby was still Foreign Secretary, and Lord Salisbury had been sent on a diplomatic mission to Constantinople. More than once our editor took occasion to contrast the warlike tones of Beaconsfield with the more moderate language of Derby, and Salisbury, and Sir Stafford Northcote. When Russophobia began to rage, he quoted an article of his own in September 1870, welcoming the advent of a powerful and united Germany strong enough to keep Russia in order. "Everybody to-day sees how just that was. Yet the same people who are now frothing at the mouth against Russia were then frothing at the mouth against Germany." It was another illustration of "the political incoherency of those men of the sword and men of the pen, who, whenever there is trouble in Europe, instantly become as quarrelsome, as mischievous, and as irrational as drunken brawlers at a fair". By the end of February 'the defiance of Europe by the worst government in Europe' was 'an achieved fact': and England was responsible. She might have pursued a moderate policy passively supporting Russia, or a stronger policy (Mr. Gladstone's) of active co-operation with the Powers in compelling the Turk to put his house in order. Instead of that we had pursued a third course, the worst possible. We had encouraged Turkey to resist, and had prevented others from exerting the necessary pressure. It was one of the ironies of the Turkish tragedy that the business of vindicating its system of government by massacre was assigned by the Porte to Effendi, a Christian Minister. This reminded Morley of O'Connell's saying: "Whenever a Christian is to be roasted, another Christian will always be found to turn the spit." Though very ready to recognise Lord Salisbury's ability and good intentions, Morley explains his failure at Constantinople by a certain weakness, a 'pliancy' in his character, thus forestalling

Bismarck's famous epigram—"a lath painted to look like iron". Had proof been given that England was in earnest about reforms, the Sultan would have submitted. So Morley thought, and apparently he would not have shrunk from a naval demonstration; but he held that it would have been wrong to take any part in military operations on the mainland. The liabilities involved in such commitments would have been indefinite and very dangerous. "Mr. Cobden said of nations going to war that they know who is their partner in the first dance; but they cannot tell with whom they may be dancing at the end of the ball."

There is something truly edifying in the patient persistency with which our editor throughout this long and tangled controversy argues for a safe and cautious yet firm middle course founded on a proper weighing both of British interests and of our moral duty to act as good Europeans. His articles might serve as a model to that *rara avis in terris*, the independent journalist with a conscience. Month by month he follows and diligently exposes the tortuous course of diplomatic insincerity. All the information available is carefully collected and skilfully sifted. How hard he worked can only be understood by one who has read after him. He seized every opportunity that offered of enlisting expert contributions and of enlarging his own knowledge. It was not merely that he followed events with a reasoned and critical commentary. A few weeks before the Czar's declaration of war, when Mackenzie Wallace's important book on Russia appeared, Morley read it with avidity and declared this, the laborious fruit of six years' travel and study, to be "one of the stoutest and most honest pieces of work produced in our time". His eighteen-page review reveals an almost prophetic power of interpretation. First he brings into view the moral debasement of the Orthodox Church and the degraded condition of its priesthood. Then he describes peasant society, and ranks the emancipation of the serfs in Russia along with the

abolition of slave labour in the United States and the extinction of the power of the Popes as "one of the three great transformations of our time", and in some respects the most remarkable of the three. The Russian peasant had his land and his commune. How different his lot from the English agricultural labourer! In truth, Russian conditions were so unlike our own that a sociologist comparing them would be as much surprised as "a naturalist who should unexpectedly stumble upon antediluvian Megatheria grazing tranquilly in the same field with prize Southdowns". Morley's reflection on all this takes the form of prediction. "The circumstance of the Commune in Russia having survived in full vigour as the social unit . . . makes it certain that Russia will move along a path of her own—whether to higher social forms than our own, or not, none of us will live to know."

The dangers threatening Europe and the United States arose from a completely different set of circumstances. Our most pressing problem was the future of industrial organisation:

> Some of us think that this will, in England at any rate, partially conform to the feudal type which it displaces; that the capitalist performs functions with which the workmen will never be able to dispense; that the immediate need of the time is the growth of vigorous combination among all kinds of labouring people, until capitalists come to be guided by those moral and social motives, for which a useful temporary substitute is found in the pressure put upon them by Trade Unions. But it would argue the infection of a doctrinaire spirit in its worst form, to insist that there can be no more than one wholesome and normal type for the industrial future of civilised countries.

In April 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey. The struggle proved much more severe than was expected. The Turks gave a wonderful display at Plevna and elsewhere of stubborn courage and military prowess against

overwhelming odds. Many who had execrated the Turk, when he was butchering women and children in Bulgaria, began to sympathise with his heroic resistance to the Russian invader. Englishmen nearly always back the weaker party ; that is one reason why they have allowed themselves to be involved in so many costly wars for 'the Balance of Power' in Europe. After the fall of Kars in November and of Plevna in December 1877, the old fear and hatred of Russia came into play ; the combative instincts of John Bull revived ; he began to stamp and swear as he had not stamped and sworn since the Crimean War. The populace took up the cry—'The Russian shall not have Constantinople', and the music-hall chorus of MacDermott's war song rang through the streets :

We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.

From this rousing couplet is derived our English word Jingo, one of the most expressive in our language, denoting the irresponsible, unreflective, quarrelsome blusterer of either sex who shouts or shrieks for any war, and is only too ready to sacrifice the lives and fortunes of others. When Lord Beaconsfield—instead of calling on this noisy mob of Jingoes to enlist—moved (in April 1878) some Indian regiments to Malta by way of intimidating Russia, the *Spectator*, then mildly Liberal, sweetly reasonable, and eminently philosophical, surprised its staid readers by a pungent parody :

We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do,
We won't go to the front ourselves, we'll send the mild Hindoo.

Perhaps the most characteristic notes of Jingoism are empty bluster and long-distance pugnacity. Your typical Jingo imperialist is a prey to panics, easily hoaxed, always on the look out for an enemy. He may be personally brave and ready to go to the front himself ; but the commoner variety prefers to stay at home. Of such were the mobs who broke Gladstone's

windows and rioted for war in the winter of 1877–78. In the Oxford Dictionary ' Jingo ' is described as " a nickname for those who supported and lauded the policy of Lord Beaconsfield in sending a British Fleet into Turkish waters to resist the advance of Russia in 1878 ". Hence Jingo is " one who brags "—as Beaconsfield did at the Guildhall—" of his country's preparedness for war or favours a bellicose policy in dealing with foreign powers ; a blustering or blatant patriot ; a chauvinist ".

At first the words Jingo and Jingoism appeared in inverted commas ; but Morley—no lover of slang or linguistic innovations—soon admitted Jingoism to his review, and counted it henceforth, with its twin-brother Imperialism, as the most pernicious of all the false sentiments that endanger society. A monthly periodical had no power to quench the flames of popular passion which at that time were being fed by most of the London newspapers ; but the *Fortnightly* did all that was possible, praising sanity and common sense whenever they came to the surface, and pouring scorn now upon ' the Turkish party ' with its hot and ignorant zeal for " a government of organised rapine, of systematised injustice, of constant oppression diversified by periodical massacre ", now upon the fashionable theory of our inevitable collision with Russia, than which there had never been a more mischievous piece of fatalism :

> You hear people talk of such a collision as if they were as helpless believers in inexorable destiny as the very Mussulmans themselves. Yet in a general way everybody would admit that it is the very province and business of statesmanship to forestall collision and cheat the destiny that only looks inexorable because men lack courage and nerve to grapple with the conditions, and skill to shape a better destiny.

He did not forget to put the commercial and economic arguments for peace against those who demanded British support of Turkish misrule. When the cry of ' British

interests' was raised on behalf of Turkey, he recalled how often that same cry had served as a pretext for disastrous wars in the past. Measured by prudence and common sense, most of these so-called British interests were mere phantoms. "But phantoms are unfortunately real in their power and influence over men's minds." The Duke of Wellington himself had said about the events of 1829: "It would have been more fortunate and better for the world . . . if the Russians had entered Constantinople and the Turkish Empire had been dissolved."

In the House of Commons there was now an effective group of Radicals, among whom Dilke and Chamberlain, Sir George Trevelyan and Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Fawcett and Courtney, all friends of Morley and all agreed in opposing Disraeli's Turkish policy, were playing prominent parts. From them Morley drew parliamentary information and criticism of the Front Bench, which had failed to present any well-thought-out alternative to Disraeli's foreign policy. This was partly Lord Hartington's fault—for his mind moved very slowly—partly the result of differences of opinion in the Liberal ranks. At the beginning of the session of 1877 the Radical group grew impatient and began to call for Gladstone to assume the lead again. In March Morley came into touch with the great man himself at High Elms, the Kentish home of Sir John Lubbock. "I spent a couple of days in company with Gladstone at the end of last week"—so he wrote to Courtney on March 17—"and told him my mind very freely. He quite agreed, and then talked nonsense about being a mere private member—a humble member, etc., etc." In the *Life of Gladstone* we have a charming glimpse of this visit:

> It was my own good fortune to pass two days with him at this moment at High Elms. Huxley and Playfair were of the party. Mr. Gladstone had with him the printer's proofs of his second pamphlet, and was in full glow against Turkish terrorism and its abettors. This strong obsession could not

Book III.

be concealed, nor was there any reason why it should be; it made no difference to his ready courtesy and kindness of demeanour, his willingness to enter into other people's topics, his pliant force and alacrity of mind. On the Sunday afternoon Sir John Lubbock, our host, took us all up to the hill-top whence in his quiet Kentish village Darwin was shaking the world. The illustrious pair, born in the same year, had never met before. Mr. Gladstone as soon as seated took Darwin's interest in *Lessons of Massacre*[1] for granted, and launched forth his thunder-bolts with unexhausted zeal. His great, wise, simple, and truth-loving listener, then, I think, busy on the digestive powers of the Drosera in his green-house, was intensely delighted. When we broke up, watching Mr. Gladstone's erect, alert figure as he walked away, Darwin, shading his eyes with his hand against the evening rays, said to me in unaffected satisfaction, "What an honour that such a great man should come to visit me!" Too absorbed in his own overwhelming conflict with the powers of evil, Mr. Gladstone made no mention of his afternoon call, and only says of the two days that "he found a notable party, and made interesting conversation", and that he "could not help liking" one of the company,[2] then a stranger to him. In his absence at church, we were talking of the qualities that send men forward and keep them back. "I should like to know", cried Huxley, "what would keep such a man as that back," pointing to where Mr. Gladstone had been sitting; "why, put him in the middle of a moor, with nothing in the world but his shirt, and you could not prevent him being anything he liked." And Huxley was as far as possible from being a Gladstonian.

Nor did Morley himself become a full-fledged Gladstonian until eight more years had gone by. But a couple of months later, in May 1877, when Gladstone put forward his five resolutions condemning Turkish misgovernment, he had the support of Morley as well as of Chamberlain, Dilke, Courtney, and most of the Radicals below the gangway. There was great excite-

[1] The title of Mr. Gladstone's second pamphlet.

[2] Morley, of course.

ment in the party. Eventually, to Chamberlain's disgust, a compromise satisfactory to Gladstone united the Liberal party in opposition to Beaconsfield's policy. Morley did not dislike the compromise. He saw in Gladstone " the great rallying-centre of popular Liberalism, and the only commander whose standard the Liberal forces of the country are willing to recognise ". He rejoiced also over Mr. Gladstone's visit to Birmingham to bless the new confederation of Liberal Associations, which Chamberlain had organised in order that all active Liberals might have a voice in framing the party's policy. To the July *Fortnightly* Chamberlain contributed a highly characteristic article on the Birmingham Caucus, in which he makes its object and his own purposes very clear. The Liberal party is to be converted into an instrument for achieving Disestablishment and other Radical reforms—rather than " the return to office of a certain number of persons of undeclared opinions ". In the same number Morley commenced ' Three Books of the Eighteenth Century ' with a brilliant essay on Holbach and his *System of Nature.* It is the beginning of the end, as he announces, of his French Studies : " With an account of these three works, I propose to quit a field of study that has perhaps taxed the readers of this review for a longer period than is satisfactory to look back upon." The account of the three books—by Holbach, Helvetius, and Raynal—will be found in three chapters of *Diderot.* Those who wish to explore a little further Morley's opinions on theology and metaphysics, on ' the official foundations of virtue ', on Freewill and Necessity, will find much to interest them in the essay on Holbach. Under the guise of describing Holbach's ideas he is often giving powerful and eloquent expression to his own.

Before the end of 1877 the Turks were beaten, and the Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople. By assuming the rôle of protector over Turkey after the Bulgarian atrocities, Lord Beaconsfield had brought about, or at least hastened, the disintegration of the

Ottoman Empire; but luckily he preferred the humiliation of failure to war with Russia, and contrived so to arrange the stage and the scenery that the crowd mistook failure for triumph. He seized an island, promoted a Conference, and brought home "Peace with Honour".

At the beginning of February war with Russia had seemed near. Turkey had sued for peace. Beaconsfield was followed about by cheering crowds. The Queen fancied that the Russians would enter Constantinople, and urged her favourite Minister to declare war. He contented himself with again ordering the fleet to Constantinople, and with an assurance to his royal Mistress that "if we only had a *corps d'armée* at Gallipoli, the crowns of Great Britain and India would be not unworthy of the imperial brow which they adorn".[1]

No English Prime Minister has surpassed Disraeli in the art or science of political imposture. As difficulties thickened, the dexterity—which Gladstone thought 'diabolical'—developed. One trick followed another, until at last the great political conjurer ended by persuading the stalls and the gallery that he had won the war without fighting. But two important colleagues left him. On January 24, 1878, Lord Carnarvon resigned the Colonial Office, objecting to warlike measures. He was succeeded by Sir Michael Hicks Beach. Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary, also threatened resignation, but consented to remain when a more pacific course was adopted, and the fleet was ordered to anchor in Besika Bay instead of proceeding to Constantinople. In March the Treaty of San Stephano was signed between Russia and Turkey. On March 27 the British Cabinet determined to call out the Reserves. This step, and the further decision to occupy Cyprus by a secret expedition from India, brought about the resignation of Lord Derby, who was succeeded as Foreign Secretary by Lord Salisbury. Derby's resignation was a severe blow to the Conservative cause in Lancashire; but enough of Russian

[1] *Life of Disraeli*, by G. E. Buckle, vol. vi. p. 244.

panic and war fever survived to keep the Government on its legs. Lord Salisbury proved to be a much abler Foreign Secretary than Derby. Secret conventions were first made with Russia and Turkey. The former agreed that big Bulgaria should be reduced and cut in two—an arrangement which lasted for seven years—and to some other modifications of the San Stephano terms. Turkey agreed that Great Britain should receive Cyprus, in return for a promise to protect Asiatic Turkey. Thus the way was paved for the Berlin Congress (June and July 1878), a spectacular affair at which the Powers ratified the partition of Turkey in Europe. Returning from Berlin in the middle of July, Beaconsfield and Salisbury were received with rapture, and for a time most people were too well pleased to be in possession of 'Peace' to be very critical about the 'Honour' with which the Prime Minister claimed to have joined it.

Among the writers in 1877 and 1878 on whom Morley drew in the contest against Beaconsfield's foreign policy were Robert Lowe, Goldwin Smith, James Bryce, Samuel Laing, and Leonard Courtney. Of these swordsmen the most effective in the strife against Jingoism and Imperialism was Goldwin Smith, whose sharp and polished blade never did better service than in cut and thrust against Disraelism. In the summer of 1878 he fell upon Joseph Cowen, the Northumbrian Radical, for declaring himself an Englishman first and a Liberal afterwards—the old plea that the foreign policy of the Government of the day, whether right or wrong, must be supported on patriotic grounds. But he was still more alarmed to see a spirit of warlike imperialism infecting the Tory party. In his view the new name 'Jingoism' represented "with singular felicity all the elements, social and moral as well as political and military, which enter into the character of this new substitute for the high-bred, and in its way high-principled, Toryism of former days". Lord Beaconsfield, he wrote, who "fancies that he has resuscitated Toryism, has in fact created or

rather organised Jingoism, being the Auto-Jingo in his own person".[1] He showed very clearly that a spirited foreign policy meant territorial aggrandisement, bloated armaments, frequent scares, and not infrequent war; and that in Disraeli's hand it was stretching prerogative, promoting maxims of personal government, and lowering the authority of the House of Commons. Unless England turned decisively against Jingoism and Imperialism, it must bid good-bye to industrial peace and commercial prosperity.

These themes the editor also pursued, and pressed on his readers with increasing force and admirable persistency. He traced the connection between war and bad trade. Analysing a great cotton strike in Lancashire (July 1878), he showed how the Blackburn rioters, who had wrecked mills and assaulted mill-owners, were composed of the same roughs who in 1868 and at previous elections had been employed to terrorise quiet voters. "We saw them in Blackburn in the autumn of 1868, scouring the streets with their picking-sticks and breaking heads and windows to the sacred tune of Altar and Throne." On the wage question Morley's sympathies were with the workmen; but he was moderate and discriminating. He admitted that the trade depression was becoming serious, and that wage reductions might have been unavoidable. Then he went on:

> Of the ultimate causes of the depression of the great Lancashire industry, some were beyond control. Neither employers nor workmen were responsible for the famine in India or the more appalling famine in China. They were not responsible for Marshal MacMahon's *coup d'État* of the sixteenth of May, which paralysed French trade and stopped up an important conduit for the consumption of goods.

[1] Three remarkable articles on Disraeli and the origin of his ideas, entitled 'The Political Adventures of Lord Beaconsfield', appeared in the *Fortnightly* at this time. They are unsigned; but their paternity is not acknowledged by the editor. I suspect that they were the offspring of Goldwin Smith's pen.

They were not to blame for a succession of bad harvests. But there has been another disturbing cause, not at all less potent than famines in the east and reactionary intrigues in the west, and this has been, and still is, the overhanging menace of European war. There is not a manufacturer or a merchant with whom you converse, who does not at once tell you that one of the most important sources of the present depression is the black cloud that has darkened the European horizon for so many months. It is notorious that nothing checks the spirit of commercial enterprise, deranges financial calculations, and baffles industrial energy so profoundly and so obstinately as the prolonged apprehension of a great war. If the Lancashire members of Parliament had gone to Lord Beaconsfield, as their predecessors are said on one occasion to have gone to Lord Palmerston, definitely protesting against England being drawn into war, they would have taken the most direct path towards revival of trade. Employers and employed alike lacked the moral courage for this, or else they lacked clear judgment. They expended on one another a resentment which would have been more usefully directed against the mischievous policy which the favourite statesman of their own county, the late Secretary for Foreign Affairs, had deliberately condemned and publicly repudiated.[1]

We may now turn from public policy to a few private letters which will illustrate Morley's life and activities. For 1877 and 1878 his letters to Frederic Harrison are missing, but some of Frederic Harrison's have been preserved. In the early months of 1877 they were still corresponding about Disestablishment, though the Eastern Question was diverting public attention more and more from home affairs. At the end of March, Meredith invites the Morleys to come to Box Hill, "before Harvest Bug Time". He descants on the view from his new chalet, and ends: "Oh my dear Morley, come if only you can, for you

[1] Morley continued the discussion of the Wage Question in an address to the Trades Union Congress at Bristol on September 11. It was fully reported in the *Times*, and was republished with notes in the *Fortnightly* for October 1878.

Book III.

are a great delight to me when I see you." Many besides Meredith have experienced Morley's art in avoiding engagements. His letters declining an invitation were often even more graceful than his acceptances. This time he seems to have indicated an uncertain date in May. Meredith, knowing his man, replied: "May, then! but let not this be one of your lyrical postponements to a phantasm appointment: the most delusive gilded thing that ever danced between Box Hill and Brighton." In April Morley was at Birmingham "caucusing with the Six Hundred". In May Harrison complains that he had not turned up at a Liberationist meeting. You seem, he said, to have dropped public life and "gone off to your hermitage and literary leisure", adding, "I wish you would found the *Weekly Republican* at once, and come and live in London, instead of this season ticket business". The great Disestablishment Scheme—described by Harrison and Morley as "our three years of labour"—was launched at this time. Morley published an article on it by Crosskey, but no popular interest was evoked. The County Franchise movement had more life in it; but the Eastern Question threw both into the shade. Indeed, at a Disestablishment meeting on May 7, 1877, Morley himself started the Eastern Question, and helped to pass resolutions in support of Gladstone.

Towards the end of August he went off with Chamberlain to the Continent and spent some time in Austria. From Salzburg he wrote to his sister, August 28, 1877:

As we drove away from here on Saturday we called at the P.O. and I was right glad to find a jolly letter from you. It recalled the old days of Florence and Rome, and even many other days much older and more far-off than these.

We got back here last night after a delightful expedition up among mountains and lakes.[1] The weather has been, and is, most glorious. To-day it is a trifle hot; the air is like

[1] They stayed on the Königsee at the little St. Bartholomä inn at the end of the lake.

glowing hot brass. On Sunday we were out all day, and yesterday also. Each day we walked a dozen miles or so, and I think it has done me good—great good. I feel quite well and cheery this morning, having gone to bed at 9 and slept well, and had a cool tubbing and a clean shirt. The little country hotel we stayed at was very fair, but a marvel of strange and appalling stenches. Chamberlain says I ought to take my holiday in Piccadilly, and I confess I like big hotels without stenches. The bag has not yet been used —nor the ammonia—nor any other of my provisions for emergency.

This afternoon we go to Linz, and start in the morning for Vienna, which is distant from Linz 7 hours' sail down the Danube. From Vienna we shall go to Ischl, probably by Saturday or Sunday.

P.S.—Did I tell Rose that we travelled by the same train as Bismarck, and had a good look at the great man?

Returning from the Continent, he revisited Pitfield for a few weeks with Mrs. Morley. Two letters to his sister describe the place in sun and storm:

PITFIELD, *October* 6.

MY DEAREST GRACE—I just drop you a line before you leave our beloved birthplace, though no startling incident has disturbed the even tenour of our ways. Pitfield has been, and is, at its very best; not a breath of wind, floods of mellow sunshine, and the landscape at your feet more glorious than ever. . . . That good fellow Maxse was up here on Monday for a bed and breakfast. He is now quartered at St. Malo for a season. There is some talk of his standing for Guildford; his rival on the [Tory] side is Brodrick, whom I think you once met at Brighton. Maxse's non-belief in the 39 articles is not in his favour.

By the way, my lunch with the Dean of St. Paul's[1] was marvellously pleasant. His family are nice simple people—and the vigorous Canon Lightfoot was there; very pleasant and friendly. I always get on better with clergymen and pastors (yes—pastors non-episcopal) than with anybody

[1] Dean Church, who afterwards contributed to Morley's Men of Letters Series.

Book III.

else. The dean took me over the Cathedral, and I enjoyed it all mightily.

Pitfield, *October* 21.—Yesterday here it was quite pleasant sitting in the bright warm sunshine in the garden with the great landscape at our feet. To-night it is blowing hardish, but I hope it will not prove such a roysterer as last Sunday. Then it was really terrific; the bed shook, the walls rocked, the roar was appalling.

The picnic at Pitfield ended early in November; but before returning to Brighton Morley spent a week-end with his old friend Thomas Fowler at Oxford. The next letter to Grace describes his visit:

4 Chesham Place, Brighton, *Nov.* 20.—I was extremely pleased to find your friendly line at the lodge gate of Lincoln College last week; for I arrived there in no very happy plight. It was cold—rain was falling in torrents—I had not been out for some days—my cold was bad. Altogether I felt that the only thing to cheer me up would be to have my hair cut and shampooed, which accordingly was done with the best effect.

Fowler had a dinner party, with Goldwin Smith, your friends Pater and Daniel, and others to meet me. They were all very jolly, and I drank merrily of our old port. In the morning I breakfasted with the Rector—very amusing and dry, as usual: lunched at Henry Smith's, the Curator of the Museum; and dined in the evening at Oriel to meet my friend the Dean of St. Paul's. More old port—and a pleasant evening. But I hate the town of Oxford, and think I will never go there again, kind and hospitable as they all are. I went to the University Sermon in the morning—to hear the Dean of St. Paul's, and a very curious performance it was.

I was delighted—as we all were—to get to Brighton again. You cannot think how luxurious our house looked after the severities of Pitfield. But I had to leave it on Tuesday night to dine *tête à tête* with Froude. He is an able man, but I never feel him to be lively or interesting. So I was not sorry when the time came for me to get up and make my bow.

I am very busy with my many irons in the fire. My books have been selling well—and Chapman is going to bring out a

new uniform edition of my *Works*, which I am now preparing for the press. Yesterday I read proofs, etc., for eight hours, and most tedious I found it. To-day—I've just had my breakfast—I mean to do the same.

Extracts from three more of these chatty letters to his sister bring us to the end of the year 1877. One mentions the arrival of his little nephew Guy, whom he had adopted after the death of his younger brother in India.

CHESHAM PLACE, BRIGHTON, *Dec.* 2.—I have had a disturbed Sunday, and don't feel myself up to working my usual hours; so I will give you a bit of chat. Macmillan and his wife are staying at the Grand Hotel and they came to lunch. . . . Then Bridges came in and talked for an hour and a half towards noon: so I have had a busy time, but for a wonder I enjoyed it, particularly Bridges.

I was in town on Wednesday and had a long talk with Cowen. The question was left open, but I have pretty well decided for my own part. I only shrink a little before taking the final plunge *out* of Parliament. He thinks the seat pretty certain.

Macmillan has just tempted me by an offer to write a short book for him; to be done in three months, and in which, as the subject would be very apropos, he sees 'millions of tin' for himself and me. I think I shall settle to it. 'Tis a pity I have not that famous sub-editor to my hand to relieve me of all that mechanical care which is such a waste of time. [The famous sub-editor is his sister.]

CHESHAM PLACE, BRIGHTON, *Dec.* 22.—At last, my dear Grace, I have a moment to breathe. The hurry of producing another *F.R.* is just at an end, and before plunging into other business that waits its turn and has been waiting, I let my mind turn northwards.

I think I cannot have written to you since my visit to Birmingham. I was there a fortnight ago for four days, of course staying at Chamberlain's. He was cool and pleasant as usual; we had a large party every night; and the whole outing did me a great deal of good, for I was rather worked down too low. I returned on the Monday. On the next

Book III.

evening I read a paper at the Metaphysical Society—you know it is an illustrious little club which first confuses itself with a bad dinner, and then makes confusion worse confounded by bad metaphysics.

Then he tells his sister about Guy, who was to be as a son to him in old age :

No one has any right to grudge me the pleasure of having a lad of my own name and stock (a bad stock enough, no doubt) to bring up, and I hope it will turn out well. . . .

Last Saturday I went to stay a night at Lord Coleridge's in London. There was a small dinner party—a cosy bedroom—and a most cordial and jovial host. They had expected me to stay until Monday—but I had arranged otherwise, so I left at midday on Sunday to lunch at the Lewes's, whither I had not been for a very long time. The great lady was in her very finest humour, and I had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

4 Chesham Place, Brighton, *Dec.* 24.—I am very well, but feel quite as a man in his 40th year ought to feel. Yes—all the kind old birthdays of Lytham are over for ever—and the poor people are all gone. And we shall soon be gone too.

His cupboards, he adds, are bursting ; so he has ordered a new bookcase.

An important event for Morley and for English literature was the planning (in 1877) of the English Men of Letters Series for Messrs. Macmillan, the most successful venture of the kind since Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*. It was no sinecure, but Morley enjoyed this new dictatorship. Most of his selections were happy, and those who have undergone the ordeal of Morley's editorial eye know how closely every volume was scrutinised by him before it reached the public.

A letter to his sister on February 10, 1878, describes the desperate press of work and yet another commitment which was to associate his name for all time with the man whom he came to regard as (with one possible exception) the greatest English statesman of the nineteenth century.

My business of which I spoke to you is to write Cobden's Life—for which I receive from the publisher a large sum, which I will not write down, but will tell you when we meet: meanwhile I will whisper to you that it is *not under 2000*, and the work will not be at all wearing, like *Diderot*, etc. *One year.*

At this moment I am simply overwhelmed. (1.) All my books are going through the press for a new and cheap edition, and I have to revise the proofs—5 sets coming in by every post. (2.) The Series is beginning—MSS., proofs, etc. (3.) Completion of *Diderot.* (4.) *F.R.* which is doing well. (5.) MSS. for Macmillan. (6.) Refusing invitations to dinner. . . . I forget if I told you that last week I dined with Chamberlain one night and Dilke the next. Both evenings were very pleasant. I fear Chamberlain did not do very well in the debate, but your friend Courtney was a great success, and I am glad of it. Things don't look pleasant; if J. Bull goes to war he will have a lesson, and perhaps the fat, blatant beast needs one. But what a fool! As if we need do anything but keep our powder dry and let Russia do what she likes. 'Tis no affair of ours.

To complete the bustle at Brighton his little nephew Guy had arrived, causing a revolution in the household. His uncle describes him as a 'model schoolboy'. They were meeting many friends in Brighton—Mr. and Mrs. Goldwin Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Bridges, Cotter Morison, and Chamberlain, 'agreeable and kind as he always is'. Fortune was smiling upon him, and he had indulged his love of music by the purchase of a grand piano. A birthday letter to his sister (April 10) compares life in town and country, much to the advantage of the latter: "Country life, in spite of a certain danger of smallness and narrowness, is best for everybody. Of that I am, and have long been, convinced. So if you take a farm, I'll bid you God-speed—and will contribute a pig or a sheep with pleasure." Guy was getting on capitally. "He is no trouble whatever—evidently inheriting his mother's kindly, easy temperament. He is as bright and blithe as a bird." Chamberlain had spent Sunday

Book III.

with them. Morley was now on the committee of the Athenæum, and had just succeeded in getting his friends Frederic Harrison and Alfred Lyall elected.

At the beginning of May he made an excursion with Mrs. Morley into the New Forest. A letter to his sister of May 6 is in his lighter vein :

I am at this moment at the —— Hotel at Lyndhurst in the centre of the New Forest. I was so excessively jaded and run down on Friday, that I bade Rose pack up, and on Saturday morning we came here for a couple of days' outing to see what spring looks like nowadays. Yesterday we had a drive of several hours in a pony-trap under our own charioteering through the most beautiful parts of the forest. The day was superb—a glorious sunshine—a fine south wind—and the trees in their delicious spring freshness. One could not have a more genuine refreshment for body and soul. This morning I feel like another creature—and ready for any amount of proofs, MSS., and the other storms and troubles of life. This afternoon we go to Holly Hill (a few miles off) to dine and sleep. To-morrow back to our gritty home. . . .

I am amused at watching the Lyndhurst curate, who lives in lodgings over the way—about 10 yards and ½ beyond the tip of my quill ; how drearily and mechanically he sallies forth to his duties ; what wistful farewell he takes of his black retriever, as to say, " I wish, my lad, we were off for a romp in the forest." . . . Now there passes a donkey with her young one up the village street : the old saddler, spectacle on nose, comes forth to pass sage judgment on the beast. How much more really interesting than Regent Street or King's Road. This is simple honest life—not fever. And so a truce to rural moralising. Our inn, by the way, *not* clean.

P.S.—New Forest very lovely, but not so stately as your Fontainebleau.

June 4, Brighton, to the same :

I have been madly busy until the end of last week ; all seemed to press at once ; the new *Fortnightly* to finish : *Diderot* to publish : and my famous Series to launch.

The two vols. of *Diderot*; and three vols of the Series—come out this week. We are anxious about the latter.

If you see any copies on the railway stalls, I look to your sisterly sentiment to encourage the sale thereof.

With *Diderot* I conclude my French friends—heaven bless them. And I shall take a little rest for a day or two before plunging into new affairs.

On Friday night I dined at Goschen's to meet the Crown Prince and Princess of Germany. It was a large party—chiefly literary; Froude, Trollope, Dean Stanley, Lewes and Mrs. Lewes (the only lady of the literary set), Leighton, the Bishop of Peterboro, Lord Ripon, Sir Garnet Wolseley. I had a pleasant chat with the Bishop, who is a clever, amusing rascal; also with Wolseley, who is also very bright and clever. Of course, I was presented to the illustrious lady, who told me she always read the *Fortnightly*, and was otherwise very gracious, pleasant, and unpretending. The Crown Prince struck me very much—quiet, strong, and really manly; very civil and grave. The room looked wonderfully bright with the stars and ribbons of the soldiers and ecclesiastics. I was talking to Mrs. Lewes when the Princess came to have her presented, and as I was boxed up in a window, I was forced to 'assist' as the French say. "I think you know my sister Louise," says the Princess, as homely as a *petite bourgeoise*. "We all like your books so much", etc. etc.

I was to have met them at lunch again yesterday—but of course all was broken off by the abominable attempt to shoot the old Emperor.

Personally, I don't much care for these royal affairs: there is a certain stiffness and awkwardness about them. Nobody can sit down so long as their highnesses choose to stand up, and so on—all of which imparts a certain inhuman quality to the meeting. However, it was a pleasant compliment to be invited, and I am glad to have seen a soldier who helped to win the battle of Sadowa, and besieged Paris.

In the archives of Hawarden I examined a bundle of Morley's letters to Gladstone. The correspondence begins with a brief note dated 4 Chesham Place, Brighton, Feb. 28, 1876: "I take the liberty of sending you the new number of my *Review* thinking that you will perhaps

Book III.

be interested by an article on the Catholic Peril in America." The note ends " Yours faithfully ", and begins " My dear Sir ".

A long interval separates this from the next, written on November 27, 1877, to beg for an article from the great man's pen: " My dear Mr. Gladstone, . . . I shall count it a singular honour and distinction if you will choose to answer Mr. Lowe in the lists of the *Fortnightly Review*. I have not presumed to ask you to write in my poor pages before." Or would Mr. Gladstone be disposed to write anything further on the Eastern Question? He claims that the *Fortnightly Review*—in its editorial portion—" has remained staunch to what you have persuaded the best part of England to regard as the true cause ". The nature of Mr. Gladstone's reply may be inferred from a further letter of November 30, which acknowledges the force of Mr. Gladstone's answer to his humble petition, but adds: " If some day it occurs that there are any crumbs from your table after those older guests are satisfied, I will hope that the *Fortnightly Review* may have the benefit of them."

After reporting a chat which a friend of his had had with Sir Stafford Northcote about the danger of allowing the Turkish fleet to be handed over to Russia, our angler puts on another fly:

> A new edition of Finlay has just come to me. Mill used to say to me that one page of Finlay is worth a chapter of Gibbon: he really tells you how it was that the Empire fell to pieces. There is a great and worthy subject for an article —a contrast between the Byzantine Empire in its strong days, as described by Finlay, and the Turkish Empire, which settled on its broken ruins.

In the following autumn (September 30, 1878) he renews his ' prayer and humble petition ' for an article from Mr. Gladstone, saying: " I have done such battle as I could for many months on behalf of the policy of which you have been the leader, and a contribution from

you would be an invaluable encouragement—not to myself only, who need none—but to waverers and doubting friends."

By this time 'the glittering dust' of the Berlin Congress was laid, and Morley had written for the September *Fortnightly* "A Political Epilogue", arguing that Disraeli's Eastern policy, which had ended in a sort of British protectorate for Asiatic Turkey, was either futile, or would involve moral and political liabilities of a most formidable character. And our reward was Cyprus, an island strategically useless and commercially worthless! He rejoices, however, that so much European territory has been withdrawn from Turkey. A new school of publicists had sprung up who hoped and predicted that the Hellenic Kingdom would inherit Constantinople and revive the glories of the Byzantine Empire. Morley did not share their views. At any rate, "the question is not ripe", he said; "above all it is a question which lies out of the reach of England, because great natural forces are at work, and must go on working, with which no artificial arrangement of Western politicians can permanently interfere". It would be as unwise for England to bind herself to any definite form of prospective settlement as to active maintenance of the *status quo*. For those who had incited war against Russia on the ground of her aggressiveness the *Fortnightly* expressed scornful indignation. It was the extremity of imperialist hypocrisy:

> We ourselves have within the last hundred and thirty years annexed a million more square miles of territory than Russia has annexed, and two hundred and fifty millions of population against her seventeen millions.
>
> Earth is sick,
> And heaven is weary, of the hollow words
> That states and kingdoms utter when they talk
> Of truth and justice.

The hypocrisy of such talk is not worse than its political unwisdom.

A policy of imperial adventure had already stirred up our military classes. The number of persons energetically interested in war and aggrandisement might be measured by the fact that, including India, " we annually spend forty-five millions sterling on the two services ". We could not hope altogether to escape the consequences of ' the vast militarism ' of the continental powers :

> But the honest traders, manufacturers, merchants, seafarers, who have built up the true greatness and solid prosperity of the land, will not suffer their fortunes to be scattered by barrack politics. But it is time that people began to face what the new talk about great armies and a commanding position in European diplomacy means. It is time that they began seriously to consider whether our free institutions, the elements of our prosperity, the character of our people, are adapted for the policy of aggrandizement.

And how unsuitable was an imperialist policy to a free democracy which demanded popular control and parliamentary criticism instead of the silence of official bureaus and the mysteries of an imperial system " where everything worth knowing in the Foreign Office, the War Office, and the Admiralty would be locked up in the Secret Boxes ".

The rapid movements of popular opinion during the Eastern crisis are recited to show how little faith could be reposed by imperialists in the British democracy. " Is it with people of such a temperament as this—moderate, cautious, and even a little too sober in their domestic affairs, but vacillating, random, and headstrong in their foreign interests—is it with these for your masters that you propose to try high flights and plunge into the shadowy hazards of great adventure ? "

No reader of " A Political Epilogue " could doubt that Cobden's biographer had been well chosen.

CHAPTER X

LORD BEACONSFIELD'S DECLINE AND FALL, 1878–80

AFTER the Treaty of Berlin, Imperialism went downhill. Lord Beaconsfield's 'dexterous charlatanry', to borrow an expression from the *Fortnightly*, had achieved its culminating triumph in Peace with Honour. After that the conjurer's tricks staled, and the sorcerer's spells lost their power to bind the multitude. As trade got worse John Bull woke up, rubbed his eyes, began to grumble and growl. It struck him that bad trade might be due to bad politics. He began to listen to Gladstone, Bright, Chamberlain, and the Radical press. Every mistake of the Government was rubbed in by the *Fortnightly Review*. Sometimes the charges seem overstated. For instance, after our experiences in the last two or three decades, the complaint that Disraeli was too fond of soothing disappointed ambition with peerages and orders provokes a smile. The couplet

> Nor mean the gift the royal grace affords ;
> All shall be knights save those that shall be lords,

should have been reserved for one of Beaconsfield's successors. But the republican indignation of the *Fortnightly* was stirred by Beaconsfield's affectation of royal favour, by his straining of the Prerogative, and by the melancholy discovery that titles and ribbons "have the same attraction for English politicians as strings of beads and painted glass have for more savage chieftains". But these important trifles would have had little effect

upon the popular vote if the chariot wheels of imperial policy had run smoothly; if the Premier had been able to combine national welfare with pomp of power, acting on Carteret's dazzling conceit: "It is my business to make kings and emperors, and to maintain the balance of Europe."

Unfortunately for Imperialism it never can glitter cheaply, or enlarge its ambit without exciting resistance and envy. Compared with Pitt and Asquith, Disraeli may be deemed fortunate. He did not stumble into the disaster of a great war. Compared with Palmerston he was unlucky; for during the closing years of Palmerston's last administration the country enjoyed peaceful progress, expanding trade, and prosperous budgets; whereas the last three years of Beaconsfield's were darkened by military misadventures, bad harvests, bad budgets, and commercial depression. John Bright used to say he only knew two good things about war. One was that you can have a very little war for a great deal of money; the other that a war always destroys the Ministry that makes it. Both these propositions apply to the little wars in Afghanistan and South Africa. They were costly, as men counted cost in those days; and they certainly contributed to the downfall of Lord Beaconsfield. To Bright's pithy and wholesome sayings may be added a third from the *Fortnightly Review* for January 1879, in reference to the Afghan War, which had broken out in the previous autumn: "Every war is, on the face of it, a confession of diplomatic failures—the miscarriage of the policy, whose object we are bound to believe was to preserve peace." Of the new 'Scientific Frontier Policy', which had prompted the design of making Afghanistan a British dependency as a bulwark against the advance of Russia, the editor wrote:

It has not been explained in what a scientific frontier consists; it has not been shown that our Indian Empire will be safer from Russian intrigue because in defiance of policy, justice, and morality we shall have pushed forward our

advance guard into the territory of a bold and hostile people, and have stationed ourselves nearer the frontier of Russia.

The view thus admirably stated was eventually adopted, when a strong and independent Afghanistan became the keystone of Anglo-Indian policy.

For the disasters in Afghanistan and South Africa more blame attaches to Lord Lytton and Sir Bartle Frere than to Lord Beaconsfield and his Cabinet; though popular disapproval was rightly visited on the Government which had allowed its proconsuls to prance and kick over the traces. Morley had been intimate with Lytton, and had given him editorial encouragement in 1876 when he was appointed Viceroy of India. Their friendship did not survive the Forward Policy on which Lytton embarked in his search for a Scientific Frontier; though in criticising his Afghan wars the *Fortnightly* was rather tender towards the culprit.[1] But if he spared Lytton's back, Morley laid the lash with doubled severity on Sir Bartle Frere, whose memory will not easily recover from the trouncings of the *Fortnightly* and the deadly nickname of 'Prancing Proconsul'. News of the disaster of Isandhlwana had arrived in London on February 11, and 'The Plain Story of the Zulu War', with which the editor began his March number in 1879, was eagerly read. It starts from the origins of the

[1] "I cannot say, dear friend of former days," wrote Lytton to Morley from Calcutta on January 30, 1879, "how acute is the pain with which I reluctantly recognise as irremediable all that is involved, to my lasting loss, in the fundamental difference between our respective views and feelings about things to which no Englishman should be indifferent, and which both of us deeply take to heart." He had survived all sense of personal soreness. "But this only increases the sadness of what I must face as inevitable. For I recognise it is through no fault of yours, or my own, that I have lost all I most cherished in our old friendship. How can I find any comfort in intimate intercourse with one who conscientiously regards me as the willing or witless instrument of a wicked betrayal, or abominable mismanagement of the highest public interest? . . . No duty of my Indian life has cost me a keener or more lasting pang than the unavoidable surrender of your sympathy and good opinion."

mischief; that is to say, from the annexation of the Transvaal by Sir Theophilus Shepstone in April 1877. A solitary but noble and far-sighted protest had been raised against it in Parliament by Courtney; and it was he who had stirred Morley to write and provided ammunition. The people did not want us—so ran the argument. We had no more right to annex the territory of the Boers than Germany would have had to annex the Swiss Republic. But the British Government thought fit to seize the country and extinguish the independence of the Boers. By the right of the strongest it proclaimed that 'what has been yours shall be ours'. Lord Carnarvon, the Colonial Secretary, prematurely impatient for a South African Confederation, ratified what Shepstone had done, and 'so landed us in the present costly policy of folly and injustice'. Then 'a worse spirit' than Shepstone appeared on the scene in the person of Sir Bartle Frere, our High Commissioner at the Cape. A lawless encroachment on Zululand followed. The just complaint of Cetewayo, the Zulu king, was answered by Frere with an ultimatum, a fatuous act worthy of the 'imperialist fire-eaters' who applauded it. It was not only morally iniquitous, but militarily imprudent, "for the High Commissioner knew that we had not the forces to make victory certain". All the pretexts for the war, including "the rape of Mr. Smith's pipe and pocket handkerchief, that we are now avenging with carnage and ruin", are carefully overhauled and illustrated by official documents. For a quarter of a century peace had been kept with Cetewayo and his Zulus. How? "By moderation, prudence, goodwill, and justice." But "Sir Bartle Frere, like all men of the bad and incompetent school to which he belongs, holds that you can only be safe by war". A change had come over the spirit of our administration, a change from equity and conciliatoriness to fraud and violence. Frere clothed his unrighteousness in the fine robe of an imperial Christian mission to civilise the heathen. His first purpose,

indeed, was by smashing the Zulus to induce the Boers to acquiesce in British rule; but there was another:

> The second element is Sir B. Frere's belief in the mission of England as a great civilising power. I believe in England's civilising power too, but only on condition that every maxim which Sir Bartle Frere's school think capital, shall be finally condemned by English opinion as infamous. His despatches abound in phrases of edification about our obligations as a civilised and Christian government, about our national guilt in sanctioning elements antagonistic to civilisation and Christianity, and so forth. When I come across such phrases in a blue-book, I shudder; they always precede a massacre. They meant here that we were putting arms into the hands of the most ferocious tribes that we could find to take our side; that gunpowder waggons with their red flags were obstructing the roads of Natal; that we had got a Gatling gun, particularly recommended for dealing death to massed groups, and warranted to turn Zulus into carrion at the rate of so many discharges per second.

Thus did Morley, in the first person, fall upon the High Commissioner for his 'blasphemous' proposal—violating 'both the letter and the spirit of the New Testament'—to diffuse Christianity by fire and sword. Surely that was not the way to improve savage tribes. "If you want to civilise Cetewayo, or to civilise so many of his people as your Gatlings spare, you will not do it by breaking up a system of society which, barbarous as it may seem, is still a sort of polity. . . . Nature will not have her hand forced. You cannot forestall the trophies of time." A few hundred pounds expended in education would have done more to extend moral influences than millions of war money. "Patience, caution, moderation—but above all else patience—these are the keywords of a true policy if, in professing to civilise South Africa, you are not to rebarbarise England."

Here is the true Morley. 'Patience, caution, moderation'—this was to be the authentic note of his grand remonstrance against the Milner-Chamberlain policy

which precipitated the Boer War in 1899, and an element in his opposition as a Cabinet Minister to the diplomacy of Sir Edward Grey in July 1914.

From the concluding paragraphs of his first essay on the Zulu War we can weigh and measure the prudent patriotism, inspired by justice and humanity, which Morley opposed to aggressive imperialism with its blind greed for gold and territory, its love of domination, its passion for war and armaments :

> The present writer is not one of those who think that war is never necessary, or that war against aborigines is never justifiable. But war is so tremendous a process, so hideous while it lasts, and after it has come to an end, so far-reaching, so subtle, and often so deadly, both in its material consequences and in its moral reaction on the character alike of conquerors and conquered, that I say it is a process which we are bound to guard with a more religious watchfulness, a more jealous scrupulosity, a sharper anxiety of conscience, than any other part or incident in our whole national life. It has been absurdly contended that the hour of war is no fitting time for judging policy. It is the only time at which we can hope that the public will seriously think of the matter at all ; and what is important is that now, when the struggle is going on, between the lines of every telegram that tells them of the fine practice of their guns, the valour of their soldiers, and the brilliant successes of their generals, our people should see written in letters of flame that this war is one of the worst crimes that has been perpetrated in our history. We shall be told that this is not patriotism. There has been enough within the last three years of that canting and insolent nonsense. We are as good patriots as they are. We have as much pride as they in the greatness of England, because it has been in the main the greatness of humanity and right. We exult as ardently as they do in the immense realm on which, as they boast, the sun never sets ; but we exult in it only because we insist that over the length and breadth of the realm there shall be perpetually shed the beams of the far more radiant and glorious sun of human justice and sovereign beneficence.

In April came further remarks on Zulu affairs from the editor's pen. Considering how much Morley did—perhaps more than any other Englishman except Burke, Cobden, and Bright—to discredit brutality and injustice towards barbarous races and to humanise imperial policy, we may well take diligent note of his controversial methods. He had no sympathy with the milk and water school of contemporary historians, and publicists, which would make politics impersonal, holding (with an excess of Christian charity) that all ministers and public servants mean well even when they do ill; that accordingly they should always be credited with the best motives, and exonerated from responsibility for any disasters which may attend their policy. On this view those who are public trustees for the lives and fortunes of their fellow-countrymen can never be put in the dock. Morley was less squeamish. In handling the Zulu War he did not belittle the responsibility of the Cabinet, but neither did he shrink from affixing a criminal responsibility upon their High Commissioner in South Africa, the man on the spot. His language is strong, but only after the evidence of the Blue books has been weighed, only after his conclusions have been fortified by ample citations. Then he expounds the duty of criticism in words that one would not willingly let die:

> Those who insist that the war is a great crime, and that its author, whatever may be his private virtues, deserves the sternest reprobation by public opinion, will naturally turn again and again to assure themselves of the evidence for so strong and unwelcome a judgment. It is an instructive measure of popular morality and temper to compare the amount of interest in the military circumstances of the war, with the interest in its policy; and to contrast the readiness with which people have hurried to condemn the general in command, for judging whose conduct they have as yet little material, with their marked unwillingness to criticise and condemn the High Commissioner, where the material for judgment is complete and decisive. There is nothing

Book III.

wonderful in this. Right and wrong are apt to confuse their outlines when the scene is seven thousand miles away. The bonds of honour and equity become slack in men's imagination when the business in hand is at the other side of the world. But those who still care about being just, and who think of national honour as including other things besides military success, will not grudge the attention that is necessary to measure the truth of the charges made with due knowledge and deliberation against the promoters of the Zulu War: that the provocation was all on our side, but was preceded by a demonstrable breach of faith involving every element of impolicy and chicane; that it is veiled by pretexts which would be worthless if they were true, and are worse than worthless because they are flagrant misrepresentations; and that it is due at the bottom to a premeditated policy of reconciling the Boers to injustice, by a deadlier and more sanguinary injustice to the Zulus. We ought not always to leave it to posterity to describe a piece of policy in its right language; there is no reason why all criticisms of contemporary transactions should be reserved for an historian a hundred years after. It is a mistake to think that a weak feeling for justice is the same thing as a strong judgment for politics.

The Zulu War is here presented to Englishmen as a glaring example of aggressive imperialism, depraving to the moral sentiment of the governing country, injurious to its industrial classes, wasteful of wealth, and cruelly unjust to the aborigines. Sir Bartle Frere's appeals to the Divine Power as his authority for decimating the Zulus and despoiling them of their lands excited a holy rage in Morley:

Consider the rank hypocrisy of it all. At the very moment that we are pharisaically contemplating England as a trustee of special appointment by the heavenly powers on behalf of the more backward races of the earth, we are massacring them by thousands, we are burning their kraals and carrying off their herds, we are breaking up first one and then another of their rudimentary systems of society, we are preparing the reign and authority of a set of men

whose only notion of improvement, on the High Commissioner's own evidence, which I will presently quote, is to improve these unfortunate wards and clients off the face of the earth.

There is no mincing of words. The accusation against Frere is that he has launched England into "an unnecessary and untimely, and therefore criminal war".[1] If a war deliberately declared is unnecessary, it is a crime, and its author a criminal. One part of the Zulu case against Frere was supported by Bishop Colenso in an 'absolutely unanswerable' statement. Frere's answer to the good Bishop is called 'a masterpiece of sophistry'. It was no excuse for the British that the Boers had been equally unjust and lawless in their dealings with the natives. The British Empire was quite large enough. England had no need to degrade herself in order to get more territory. There was a school of politicians "who think it a glorious and noble thing for a nation to waste and destroy its capital, lavishly to augment its burdens, and with a light heart to plunge into one barren enterprise after another. . . . It is for the people of England to decide whether this shall be or not; whether they are content to be taxed for the pleasure of men who unite the mean avarice of hucksters to the lawless violence of buccaneers; and whether the old realm which was once the home of justice and freedom is to be transformed into a Pirate-Empire, with the Cross hypocritically chalked upon its black flag."

Morley's predictions of evil came true. The disaster of Isandhlwana was followed in June by the death of Prince Louis Napoleon on the Ilyotoze River. Sir Garnet Wolseley's military skill retrieved the failures of Lord Chelmsford; but an unlawful annexation and an unjust war left misery, discontent, and racial animosity

[1] But for the Queen, Lord Beaconsfield would probably have recalled both Frere and Chelmsford. He wrote to her, August 30, 1879, of "the unhappily precipitated Zulu War, the evil consequences of which to this country have been incalculable" (see *Life of Disraeli*, vol. vi. p. 459).

Book III.

in their train. The evil deeds of Shepstone and Frere were to issue in a catastrophe far more costly than Morley had conceived in his prophetic wrath. His wisdom in urging that the Zulus and other semi-independent tribes should be allowed to enjoy their lands and liberties has now been acknowledged, and a very different spirit has been infused into Native Administration throughout South Africa. Nor were his criticisms unsupported at the time. In the House of Lords, Lord Lansdowne's motion (March 1879) condemning the Zulu War and regretting that Sir Bartle Frere had not been recalled, was only defeated by 156 to 95 votes; in the Commons a few days later Sir Charles Dilke mustered 246 votes against 306 after a three nights' debate. All sections of the Liberal Party were now practically united in condemnation of Lord Beaconsfield's foreign and imperial policy. He had coined an expression, 'Imperium et Libertas', which reminds us of a later mintage—'Liberal Imperialism'. In the eyes of Morley, as well as of Gladstone, both ought to be classed among varieties of the political oxymoron—two incompatibles joined together; for how can the spirit of domination and the spirit of freedom breathe the same air? Liberty for ourselves and slavery for others: so Gladstone rendered the Beaconsfield emblem of Empire and Liberty during that Pilgrimage of Passion in Midlothian which changed the currents of national feeling and helped mightily to swell the rising floods of Liberalism. The Forward Policy of Lytton in India received a mortal blow on that tragic day of September 1879 when Sir Louis Cavagnari and other members of the British Mission at Cabul were set upon by Afghan soldiers and murdered. To avenge this outrage another expedition marched to Cabul under Sir Frederick Roberts, and an attempt (soon to be abandoned) was then made by the British Government to undertake the temporary administration of Afghanistan. Perhaps of all the critics John Bright spoke most truly when he said that 'vain-

glory' was the distinguishing mark of British policy in the days of Beaconsfield. Those days were now numbered. Encouraged by a bye-election victory at Southwark in February, the Prime Minister early in March announced that Parliament would be dissolved as soon as the Budget had been taken. He sought to make the elections turn on Irish Home Rule, that question having been brought into some prominence by the obstructive tactics of Parnell and Biggar, with whom Chamberlain had formed a sort of working alliance in the House of Commons. But Gladstone took care that the issue should be, as he put it, between Jingoism and Liberalism, between the wastefulness of a warlike administration and his own programme of peace and economy.

* * * * *

We may now turn from the main battle to Morley's life and letters in the last year of the Beaconsfield Government. He was hard at work on the *Fortnightly*, the *Life of Cobden*, and the English Men of Letter Series all through the year 1879. His own brilliant biographical study of Burke—his third Burke—appeared in the Series at the beginning of autumn. In January he asked Leonard Courtney to do Adam Smith:

BRIGHTON, *January* 22.—My dear Courtney, I should much like to be allowed to put you down in my Series for Adam Smith—of whom, or of which, I spoke to you. There is no urgency whatever. A year hence would do, but I want to announce a new batch. It is only about 110 pp. of the *Fortnightly*; biographical material abounds; and there is the immortal book; and the subject. It would be a mere bagatelle to you—not so troublesome as writing a lecture for Plymouth. The honorarium would be the modest amount of One Hundred Pounds.

Then in a postscript:

Your passion for a wind would be abundantly gratified on our Downs to-day. A raging north-easter.

Courtney gave the promise but never fulfilled it, and

the book was eventually written more than twenty years later by a much humbler individual. It was, I fancy, the last book of the Series to which the editor's 'procrustean rigour' was applied.

In the January *Fortnightly* there appeared an article by H. D. Traill entitled 'The England of To-day', primed with panic and pessimism. Englishmen, it declared, were unconscious of the dangers menacing their Empire, and unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary for its defence. Morley thought it necessary to correct Traill in an editorial note:

> I have heard doctors say that if a man were to let his mind dwell from day to day upon all the possible dangers that may be secretly lurking in his bodily organs, or awaiting him from external mischance, that might cut off his life before the evening, he would speedily and inevitably go stark mad. What sensible men do is to take care against all the ordinary risks, to pay their insurance premiums, and to go about their business. It is unfair to charge England with being false to their theory and ideals, simply because we reject the sombre visions of political hypochondriacs and refuse to play the part of a giant *malade imaginaire*.

At this time he was maintaining with vigour his protests against the Forward Policy in South Africa and India. In February he quoted with approval an opinion expressed by J. A. Froude: "The Transvaal, in spite of prejudices about the British flag, I still hope that we shall restore to its lawful owners." This was some nine months before the Boers took up arms. If the Government had acted on this advice there would have been no Majuba to avenge.

In January 1879 Morley began to look for a house in the Wimbledon neighbourhood, feeling that Brighton was too far away from his work.

> Brighton, *February* 10. *To Grace Morley.*—At length the house is chosen and taken—to wit, at West Hill, near Putney Heath—Berkeley Lodge, of which we talked when

you were here. It is a fine large house—drawing-room 40 feet long—ten bedrooms—an acre of nice garden—stables—wide views. So we shall do very well. Quarter of an hour from station—70 trains to town per diem—return fare, first class one shilling. Rent not so low as this by a long way, but still under £200. Our moving will begin about March 20. My future landlord is a man of piety, and presented me with a handsomely bound copy of the Scriptures, which he happens to have published in a revised version. . . . Your room will be a spacious chamber facing to the south. There is a church fifty yards off. . . . My Series flourishes bravely. We have sold 30,000 of them already.

A few days later he wrote again; this time about standing for Parliament:

You ask me about elections and parliaments, as do many other people. No, my dear, I do not feel so disposed. My time and attention are fully absorbed by necessary work. I have not yet £1000 to fritter away. My health is not so inexhaustibly vigorous that I can afford to add a new strain of a worse kind than any it has yet had to endure. If I want to say anything, I can say it with quite as much certainty of being listened to as if I were in Parliament. Therefore, though I probably should not have sense enough to decline a certainty—I don't think about the matter. My little momentary glimpse of a chance at Blackburn I now consider at an end.

The removal was to begin on March 17.

I shall be glad when it is over; for, among other things, the inevitable journeys to and from Brighton I feel to be a serious tax on my strength, and the mere arrangement of them adds to the general wear and tear.

He had just finished the production of a *Fortnightly Review*, 'always a matter of rush and hurry'. He tells his sister how strongly he has been moved by the news from Zululand. "My inkpot steamed. My quill pen sweated. So hot is my wrath." The article pleased Courtney, a most vigilant critic from the first of the

Book III.

Government's South African policy. "I am particularly glad", so Morley wrote to Courtney on March 4, "to have your approval of my article, as without your help and prompting it could not have been written."

March 16, Brighton, written on 'Our last Sunday afternoon at Brighton':

I need not say that I am hard at work. My Zulu article has excited a great deal of talk, and sold a good many copies; and I think of firing another bolt in the next number; if I can get time to squeeze it in some day this week. The Series flourishes bravely indeed. But the strain is heavy. I cannot be glad enough that I am going nearer to my work. The double journey quite knocks me up. One ought to begin to remember that a man of forty is not up to the fine doings of twenty-five. . . . Chamberlain and I had a friendly *tête-à-tête* at the Reform a fortnight since, and I expect to repeat the pleasant ceremony on the 6th, when I am thinking of going to one of Lord Hartington's receptions.

March 27, Berkeley Lodge, Putney, his first letter from the new house, which suited them well: "On Monday evening I went to the concert and heard Joachim and Janotha? They played a delightful trio of Mozart's. Of Joachim I need not speak, but I found Janotha a magnificent player; so firm, masculine, and exact. She pleased me very much indeed." He had been to Hartington's reception at Devonshire House. "It was a brilliant affair; the place is really a palace."

On April 10 he sends his sister a birthday cheque and another 'on account of Cobden copying'.

If you are in a sombre mood, as one ought to be on one's birthday, then the black day of the Xtian Church will fit in. I remember how I used to hate going to St. John's on Good Friday in my youth, because there was no organ.

The Putney house was still carpetless and curtainless, but nice, and the garden 'capital', full of trees and birds. He had been dining and lunching with Leonard Courtney. "He is very jolly and honest. I fancy there is no love

lost between him and a more intimate friend of mine." He records also a dinner with Leslie Stephen, 'very slow and meaningless'. That afternoon Mr. Thomasson of Bolton was coming down for two or three hours to talk about Cobden. "You know that Maxse now lives about a mile off on the Common. I am very fond of him, in spite of his faults, if faults he has."

BERKELEY LODGE, *April* 27.—I *did* go to Paris, as I forewarned you. I started on Tuesday, the 15th, by the tidal at 1.40, and found myself after a smooth crossing and a quiet journey at the old Gare du Nord, at 11.40, and at my hotel by a few minutes past midnight. It was raw and cold, but I had telegraphed from Boulogne for rooms and found a fire and all comfortable. I did not go to the Grand nor Louvre as usual, but the Hôtel du Helder, just off the boulevard. It was very neat, and clean as a pin, and you got decent food and attendance. I shall never go to one of the great caravanserais any more. My reason for going was to find out what was to be said about politics for an article, which you will see in my next No. So I was tolerably busy. I wrote all the forenoon in my little sitting-room, in the afternoon saw people, and on two evenings went to the theatre. Among other places, I went one evening to Victor Hugo's, where Renan also was. V. H. is older than I expected: very quiet, gentle, courteous. Renan is brilliant and full of interest. I had a good talk with Cherbuliez, whom I always like to see. He is both genial and sensible. My visit only lasted four clear days. . . . On Tuesday Miss Cobden and her sister came to lunch; and Maxse and Chamberlain to dine.

The article which had taken him to Paris appeared in the May *Fortnightly*. It was called "The French Republic and the Catholic Church", and marks a change from the attitude he had adopted towards Bismarck's legislation against Ultramontanism. M. Jules Ferry had introduced a Bill prohibiting 'unauthorised Orders' (mostly Jesuits) from taking part in education, and otherwise trying to get rid entirely of clerical control over education, on Gambetta's principle that Clericalism

was the enemy. We have a lively picture of the strife that ensued :

> In one place it is a light skirmish between two handfuls of free lances ; in another it is the heavy shock of great bodies of men, with masterly organisation and full panoply. Passionate declamation and trivial anecdote, venomous satire against persons and magniloquent appeal to principles, the slang of the street, the thunders of the pulpit, the heavy drumming of philosophic text-books, the shrill whine of the Black, the rasping clamour of the Red, fill the air with an uproar that stuns and confuses. Any casual sheaf of journals from the first kiosk on any day you please shows what is going on.

Morley admitted that the secular government was embarrassed by the hostility of the priesthood, but urged that its right course was to provide a better education than that provided by the religious orders. But there was a still more important question to which no proper answer had been given :

> Is the sentiment of the French nation in favour of legislation of this kind, or against it ? If the common sentiment is against it, then it is inconsistent with the principles of sound government, to force a law for which opinion is not only not prepared, but against which it is actively hostile. If on the contrary, the common sentiment is in favour of it, then the law is superfluous ; it cannot be worth while to introduce legislation of the most violently irritating kind, merely to guard the nation against perils from which its own firm prepossessions would guard it independently of legislation. The law is either impotent or it is unnecessary.

In practice the law would be evaded and would cause intense irritation. Morley appeals to French Liberals for a really Liberal policy even against their enemies :

> All these considerations are so obvious, the flaws in the logic of the defenders of restriction and repression are so plain and decisive, that calm onlookers may well suspect that the bill is rather of the nature of a weapon of retaliation,

than a well-considered attempt to reconstitute national education. We may understand the desire of a French Liberal to be avenged on the party which for so many years has kept his country in an inextricable network of fiery perils. But this is a mere infirmity of the flesh. Hatred is not in the catalogue of a statesman's virtues. Party revenge is no fit passion for a man who loves his country.

Let the clericals steal Liberal maxims; but never let them tempt Liberals into borrowing their methods. Morley had learned a lesson from Bismarck's failure.

In May Egypt supplied the editor with a new illustration of Cobdenism, and he denounces the proposed joint intervention of England and France:

The real course to pursue is perfectly clear and simple. It is to let Egypt severely alone. This is the true policy not of England singly, or of France singly, but of both together, and as such it is recognised by the less heated and more far-seeing portion of the press in both countries.

They should leave Ismail Pasha to get out as best he could of the troubles he had brought upon himself.

Whatever allowances he could make for French Clericalism, Morley would have no traffic with Napoleonism. In June he wrote:

With the death of the son of Napoleon III. there has disappeared the imperial pretender round whom there clustered the corrupt memories of the second empire, its scandals, iniquities, and the terrible associations of Sedan. It was the fatal destiny of the youth to have inherited all that was disastrous in the national recollection of his father, and all that was unwelcome in the political past of his mother. It was not, and never could have been, forgotten that he had been the child for whose sake the ex-Empress Eugénie had stimulated the war which lost France two provinces.

Two months later, when an absurd movement was got up to erect a monument to the Prince Imperial in Westminster Abbey, the *Fortnightly* objected that it would be an insult to Republican France, adding: "It is

unpleasantly like hypocrisy to exclude Byron, for instance, from Westminster Abbey, while complacently making room for a Napoleon, whose name has for ninety years been the European symbol of retrogression, fraud, lawlessness, and bloodshed." The monument was not set up.

Discussing the House of Commons at the end of the session, Morley made a vigorous defence of the Radicals —Chamberlain, Dilke, and others—who had joined with Parnell and the Irish to harass the Government. It was often said by Tory speakers that the nation was beginning to regard the proceedings of the House of Commons with a mixture of contempt and indifference. As for *indifference*, he replied, the giving of less space to Parliamentary debates was no sign ; it was to be explained by the growing number of subjects that were interesting to readers of newspapers. As for *contempt*, it was true that two years ago the passions raised by the Russo-Turkish War led to unseemly scenes in the House. But to cry out against obstruction as bringing the House into contempt was unwarrantable. To begin with, in the past the Irish had done good work, *e.g.* they joined Courtney in 1877 when he protested against the annexation of the Transvaal. Again this session their action in joining with Chamberlain to obstruct the Army Bill in order to abolish flogging in the army had had excellent results. "If flogging is not abolished, its days are now assuredly numbered." Then again:

> Mr. Parnell denies that he and his friends have any intention of damaging the House of Commons, and there seems to be no reason to doubt his sincerity. If, however, the real motive of the Irish party were less to make English legislation good than to secure attention to the requirements of Ireland, then it must be admitted that they have not been unsuccessful, and it is difficult to see why such a motive is not entirely natural and free from discredit.

Had not the Government already begun to pay more attention to Irish grievances? Out of this matter a

squabble had taken place between Chamberlain and Lord Hartington, the official leader of the Opposition, and Morley as usual supported Chamberlain. He was all for the aggressive skirmishers who moved ahead of 'the old gang', and quoted with approval the action of Fox, who opposed the French War, when the bulk of official Whiggism went over to Pitt. At this time Chamberlain was a vigorous opponent of Beaconsfield's imperialist policies and a stout supporter of non-intervention; chiefly because Imperialism distracted attention from his Radical programme. He was not, indeed, even in the 'seventies—as Morley remarks in his *Recollections*—a true disciple of Cobden and Bright. Chamberlain's Anti-Imperialism, like his Imperialism, lacked moral fervour. You miss the note of pity for the victims of tyranny, of indignation against wrongdoers. But in the public eye, from 1875 to 1885, Chamberlain was the uncompromising Radical and Little Englander. Where he differed from Morley, it was in tone and temper; seldom in policy.

From politics we return to literature and music in a letter to Frederic Harrison of September 1, 1879, written after a visit to Birmingham:

> We had a most adorable feast of music, winding up with Cherubini's sublime Requiem in C, which stirred me as mightily as any performance I have ever heard. Oh, that Catholic Church! What an incomparable treasure-house of all that is noblest, tenderest, most thrilling, most awful. Newman was there with his purple cap, interesting one like some venerable ruin, of beautiful and glorious associations. And Lord Norton and Lord Hampton, the poor old Tory hacks, were there, honourably sitting out all Requiems and Lobgesangs, for the good of the party and the credit of the county families. Next to the Catholic Church I put the British Aristocracy, among the bodies who understand their own business. . . . Your excellent article will appear in October, D.V. It surprises me that you can make these severe subjects so genuinely readable. The matter is made curiously

alive and real—and that is the decisive mark of literary mastery—and that is what is at the root of what you notice in the case of Arnold and Symonds. The latter, in spite of his knowledge and his very charming style, does not bring his matter into contact with the living things of the world—and M. A. never fails to do it. In your subjects both Maine and you seem to me to do it consummately well. But then both you and he live in the world of affairs, and so does Arnold, poet though he is.

Apropos, will you do Shakespeare for my Series ? I have only asked (*a*) Arnold, who hummed and hawed and then declined; (*b*) Mr. Lewes, who considered for a week and then declined. Now do you consider for a fortnight and then accept. No learning of the industrious fleay type. About 70 or 80 *F.R.* pages of the World poet. You may smuggle the whole religion of Humanity in upon the British public in that. Seriously, think of it.

A letter of September 5, 1879, thanks Mr. Gladstone for ' friendly expressions ' about his *Life of Burke* :

I was particularly anxious for your approval, for I knew from one or two conversations with you how much interest you take in Burke, and how much you have pondered on his career. Some of my friends cannot hear his name with patience, and no doubt he did much mischief. But he was a great man, and one must admire greatness when joined to such beneficence of intention as Burke had. I should much like to hear Lord Beaconsfield's own account of the parallel which he evidently draws between himself and the intended bearer of the title. As it is, there is an incredible absurdity and impudence in any such parallel. Burke was a very idolater of that Venetian aristocratic system which Lord Beaconsfield has so fiercely denounced.

On September 20 he wrote from Berkeley Lodge to his sister Grace :

We all came from Whitby a week ago—stopping a night on the road at York, where there is an admirable hotel. We went twice to service at the Minster, and had a pleasant walk

through the old streets. . . . My loathing for Putney is absolute, but it works well.

They were going to the Merediths for a couple of days.

Domestic news none, which is better than the public news. Anything more abominable than Lytton's Afghan scrape cannot be imagined. The British public will have to pay for their Tory whistle this time and no mistake. Get your tax money ready, my dear. Yesterday R., E., and F. went to the theatre, while I entertained our good friend Courtney. He came in the afternoon to have a walk, and a famous day it was for a walk. Then we dined *tête à tête*, and had a most pleasant evening. He is a favourite of mine, and a good fellow, and a powerful fellow too !

For his October number Morley wrote a short article entitled " A Word with Some Critics ". It examines some charges of inaccuracy made by the *Academy* and the *Athenæum* against his *Life of Burke*, which had just appeared in the English Men of Letters Series. E. J. Payne, editor of Burke's writings in a school edition, had contributed a signed review to the *Academy*, claiming to have discovered numerous errors in the latter part of the book. Morley says :

After giving as friendly approval as the occasion required to two-thirds of the book, he falls upon the ninth chapter as quite unworthy of the rest, as careless from beginning to end, and as demonstrating that I have for this period taken no pains to do justice to my subject. A charge of this sort may well be to a man of letters as the charge of cowardice to a man of battle.

Taking up six charges of some importance he shows that, in each case, not he but Payne was at fault. One instance may be given. Payne complained : " Mr. Morley's carelessness sticks by him even to the end. The style by which it was proposed to make Burke a peer was not Lord Beaconsfield, but Lord Burke." But, as Morley points out, Prior in his biography states

that both titles were proposed. And Lord Stanhope, a better authority than Prior, states that Beaconsfield was the final choice. Stanhope says: "Already was the title chosen as Lord Beaconsfield. Already was the patent preparing." Morley admits two tiny inaccuracies. He had said that Burke established a school for emigrant children at Beaconsfield, whereas he ought to have said 'at Penn', near Beaconsfield:

> In another place it appears that I have written 'stock' where I ought to have written 'fund'. It is possible that the critic really thinks that two inadvertencies of such kind and degree as these justify him in bringing sweeping charges of carelessness, thoughtlessness, and injustice? If he does think so, then I cannot help it if my memory recalls those rash scholars a hundred and eighty years ago who supposed that they were demonstrating the genuineness of *Phalaris's Letters* and *Æsop's Fables* when they convicted Bentley of having written Buda where he ought to have written Belgrade.

The *Athenæum* writer had made the peculiarly exasperating criticism that "many inaccuracies might be noted, but he contents himself with two". Morley shows that the first alleged inaccuracy is a misinterpretation by the critic, and the second is merely a question as to the influence of French opinion upon the American Revolution, in which Morley maintains his ground against the critic. He added that he had applied to the *Athenæum* for the list of inaccuracies and received no reply. To this the *Athenæum* (October 4, 1879) made the lame rejoinder: "The fact is that we have found that to draw up the long list asked for would be a serious labour, and we fail to see that we are bound to help Mr. Morley to prepare his second edition. When that edition appears we shall be happy to point out the slips in it." The feud with the *Athenæum* appears to have been made up; for within less than two years it published a most laudatory review of Morley's *Life of Cobden*.

In October, when news had come of the massacre of

Sir Louis Cavagnari and his escort at Cabul, Morley wrote in the *Fortnightly* :

The Ethiopian does not change his skin, nor the leopard his spots ; the Afghan Mussulmans will not lay aside their implacable hostility to the presence of an English resident, merely because of the importunity of British policy. Of course we may establish another envoy at Cabul, and another and another. But it is perfectly clear after what has occurred that the life of no envoy who is not protected by an adequate escort can be safe, and that no escort can be adequate which is not practically equivalent to an army of occupation.

Next month the editor delivered a sharp attack on the foreign policy of the Government, expressing his agreement with Chamberlain that there ought to be a party in the country " to whom the all-important thing in the approaching contest is not merely that Lord Hartington should be in office and Lord Salisbury out, but that a peremptory check shall be given to the whole system of letting our own affairs go wrong while we absurdly busy ourselves in a futile meddling with the affairs of other nations ".

In the autumn of 1879 Morley accepted an invitation to contest Westminster and missed a chance of getting in for Newcastle. On November 19 he wrote to his sister Grace :

In the midst of hurry-skurry, and a table crowded with papers, I insist upon clearing a corner and seizing five minutes for a line or two to you. But you ought to be here, writing my letters, instead of planting yourself two or three hundred miles away, needing to be written to. By the way, are you coming to my great meeting ? It is to be either December 9 or December 11, at St. James's Hall. Much will depend on the way I acquit myself on that occasion. We should all like you to come, if you would—of course to stay some considerable time. Our living rooms all face south, and also your bedroom—and we have sunshine all day long, provided that the sun shines. It makes things so much more comfortable than they were at Brighton or T. Wells. . . .

To go back for a moment to Westminster: I must beg you not to think that standing for a place is the same thing as sitting for it. Smith will be mighty hard to beat, and I don't suppose Sir G. Russell, the other member, will prove much less so. If we win one seat even, Hobhouse, my colleague, has as good a chance as I. So don't be very confident. I am very cool about it. It is a great honour to be asked to stand for Westminster—tho' I hardly know why. I told them I would pay no money, attend to no local business, and have nothing to do with the details and arrangements of the election, but I would speak as much as was necessary. All depends on that. If it turns out that I can speak so as to hold great audiences, I have a chance. Hobhouse, my colleague, is a man of about 60—a thorough gentleman, and an able man, but perhaps rather too hard and logical for the British public.

To-day we are in a bustle. The two Miss Cobdens come to lunch at one; Mrs. Huxley to tea at five, and I have to dine with Chamberlain in London at six-thirty. He starts to-morrow for a month's holiday in Spain—lucky fellow. . . .

Mr. Swan of Newcastle wrote to me on Saturday last whether, as Albert Grey had gone to fight South Northumberland, I would have my name submitted at Newcastle. Of course it was too late. Newcastle would have suited me much better than Westminster; because it is more radical, and because the recovery of the second seat from Hamond is thought to be certain. Scotland, I rejoice to think, is expected not to return more than six Tories in all! There's a great country for you!

I can only muster three persons on my committee as yet—Pattison, Fowler, and Abbott; but I've got Darwin, Huxley, Grant Duff, etc.—and S. Morley is to be one of the chairmen, Lord Hartington and Lord Grosvenor the other two. So the odour of atheism and red radicalism is modified and sweetened by these perfumes of respectability.

On December 13, Morley wrote to Gladstone about a small difficulty in his *Life of Cobden* arising out of correspondence between Gladstone and Cobden in 1860 on the wine duties, about which "Cobden even displays

a sort of heat". He begs for a few moments of conversation when Mr. Gladstone is next in London, in order that he may "seize the thread of the difference and learn how it ended".

Having accepted a nomination for Westminster, Morley stood with Sir A. Hobhouse as one of the two Liberal candidates against W. H. Smith and Sir C. Russell, a colonel of the Grenadier Guards who had won the Victoria Cross at Inkerman. Westminster's old Radical traditions and its associations with Charles James Fox and John Stuart Mill no doubt attracted him; but he must have found long before the poll that he had no real chance. His election address, issued on March 12, denounced the foreign policy of the Government in Eastern Europe and elsewhere as "fatally wanting in decision, in clearness of comprehension, and in political uprightness". Ministers had lessened the material strength of the realm by unnecessary engagements and mischievous annexations; they had lessened its moral strength by stealthy engagements and unjust wars. Their return to power would mean that the most vicious land system in the world would remain untouched, that the glaring absurdities of our electoral system would continue, that the administrative confusion of the metropolis would be unabated, and that no serious attempt would be made to lighten or adjust either local or imperial taxation. The London Water Bill was a test of the Government's incapacity; but they had in foreign affairs made just as bad a bargain for the public interest at Constantinople, in South Africa, and in Afghanistan. Though he would maintain the Union, he pleaded for a policy of generosity, sympathy, and intelligent attention towards Ireland.

On March 15 a crowded meeting was held at Exeter Hall, when Morley and Hobhouse were supported by Robert Lowe. Morley's speech was a sharp attack on Lord Beaconsfield and his election manifesto. Contrasted with it, those of Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and

Book III.

Mr. Lowe struck him as "the sound of a silver trumpet after listening to the meaningless boom of a mountebank's drum". Lord Beaconsfield and Napoleon III. were both masters of 'vague and pompous phrases', and both had wrought injury to the countries they ruled. He was for England raising her voice in the Councils of Europe, but on three conditions—first, that it should be raised at all times in favour of freedom; secondly, that the measure and degree of her action should be limited by common sense; and thirdly, that England should not give so much attention to other people's affairs as would make her neglect 'the vast and immeasurable burdens of the affairs which rested upon her own shoulders'.

Then he turned to Ireland. The report runs: "On the Home Rule question, after declaring that he would not vote for Home Rule, he expressed his desire that more earnest and sincere attention should be devoted to efforts to bring Ireland for the first time into unity with England." Lord Beaconsfield's address proved a very damp squib, and the Liberal candidates everywhere made great play with it. On March 19, Morley returned to the charge: "Lord Beaconsfield's manifesto would do the Conservatives great harm. They felt that to send 500 gentlemen to the country with that incendiary document was an act which had never been rivalled since Samson sent 300 foxes with fire-brands attached to their tails among the standing corn of the Philistines." But Westminster had lost sympathy with Radicalism. When the poll was declared on March 31 the figures were:

Rt. Hon. W. H. Smith (C.)	9093
Sir Charles Russell (C.)	8930
Mr. John Morley (L.)	6564
Sir A. Hobhouse (L.)	6448

Morley was beaten but not discredited. Smith's majority of 2527 compared with 5522 in 1874.

On March 13 he dined with Mr. Gladstone, who found

time after the election to send him a consolatory note. With Morley's reply, written from Berkeley Lodge on April 7, 1880, this chapter may fitly conclude:

DEAR MR. GLADSTONE—It was very kind of you to take the trouble to write to me in the midst of the momentous interests around you. Of course, we knew at the outset that we were engaged in a forlorn hope, but the result has been on the whole satisfactory. Old differences in the liberal camp have now been effaced and a sanguine spirit has revived.

I am sorry to say that it is quite true that Huxley (and also Tyndall) did not wish well to the liberal cause. Darwin, on the other hand, was staunch throughout. For myself, I have always felt that the scientific specialist is most likely of all men to lose the useful and human point of view. His mind is inevitably narrowed, I fear, by the narrowness or minuteness of the specialist's conception of Truth; and this narrow view of Truth chokes his care for Freedom and Humanity. It would be interesting to consider how, by different paths, the men of science and their foes, the priests (Anglican no less than Roman), have come to the same disregard for political morality.

But you will hardly have a mind for these speculations at the present moment. It is needless to say how keenly I exult in the magnitude of the victory which you have won. It is not often given to a public man to perform so beneficent a service, in stirring all that is best in his countrymen in successful protest against all that is worst. It is only now that I realise how dark was our hour two years ago.

With heartfelt congratulations, believe me, Yours most faithfully, JOHN MORLEY.

CHAPTER XI

EDITOR OF THE 'PALL MALL GAZETTE'

1880–1883

Book III.

In the new House of Commons were seated 347 Liberals, 240 Conservatives, and 65 Irish Nationalists. The Liberals included a strong Radical left wing and a smaller right wing of Whigs. For men of Morley's persuasion the outlook was promising, and in the May *Fortnightly* he hailed the Liberal victory with enthusiasm: "It is the first occasion", he wrote, "on which, after a long campaign in one great pitched battle, the party of justice, moderation, and peace have routed the party of aggression, intrigue, and lawless national vanity." He had no doubt that Imperialism was the main issue; and it had been decisively rejected. Disappointments were in store. But meanwhile his own influence was suddenly doubled. No sooner was Mr. Gladstone installed Premier by his very reluctant Sovereign, and no sooner had he, with almost equal reluctance, admitted Chamberlain to his Cabinet as President of the Board of Trade, than Morley found himself editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, an evening newspaper. It had been started in 1865 by George Smith of Smith Elder, a very successful business man and publisher, who will always be honoured by English men of letters as founder of the *Dictionary of National Biography*. He was a Liberal, and so at first was the *Pall Mall's* very able editor, Frederick Greenwood. But after a time Greenwood's political opinions

changed. Disraeli's foreign policy attracted him, and by the end of the 'seventies he was a Tory Imperialist. George Smith had watched the metamorphosis with increasing dissatisfaction, and at last he could bear it no longer. He transferred the paper to his son-in-law, Mr. Henry Yates Thompson, a Radical of the Manchester or rather of the Liverpool School, who had contested South-west Lancashire with Gladstone in 1865, and had served as private secretary to Spencer when the Red Earl was Irish Viceroy in Mr. Gladstone's first Administration. At his request Morley undertook the editorship. In the *Recollections* he describes his proprietor as liberal-minded, loyal, bold, and indulgent. They remained life-long friends, and found themselves together in opinion, holding unpopular views, at more than one crisis in our national history. On April 28, Leslie Stephen—who had been consulted by George Smith—wrote to his American friend Charles Eliot Norton :

> The *Pall Mall Gazette* has been the incarnation of Greenwood, and, as you know, the most thorough-going of Jingo newspapers. A transformation is to take place, probably next Monday, in virtue of which the *P.M.G.* will appear as a Liberal organ. I am a good deal amused by the catastrophe, which will shock many virtuous old Tories, to whom the *P.M.G.* appeared as a kind of Abdiel. I fancy also that the experiment will be a very ticklish one, as it must clearly involve the loss of a great many of the old audience.

Morley was installed on Monday, May 3, while Greenwood started a new evening paper, the *St. James's Gazette*, which catered for Tory palates. Just before taking over the *Pall Mall*, Morley made what is called in journalistic slang 'a scoop' for the *Fortnightly Review*. He persuaded Mr. Gladstone to send him a contribution about the General Election. But Mr. Gladstone would not sign it and merely affixed the letter E. The editor wrote promising to keep the secret. The proof " will pass through my hands, so that we may not put the discretion of the printer and others to too severe a test.

No one will be in the secret but myself : of course in time it will be likely to ooze out—from internal evidence if for no other reason." In enclosing the proof he ventured to suggest a change :

> One point is in my mind. Is it well to use an initial by way of signature which does indeed belong to you, but still is less distinctive than any other ? I mean, is it not a rather doubtful way of throwing readers off the scent ? If you do not feel it, there is an end of the matter. But I thought it within my editorial privilege to tell you my own thoughts about it. People will be sure to know the authorship of it one day—and then this signature might be taken as artificially misleading.

Mr. Gladstone must have agreed. His contribution took the form of a letter, signed " Index ".

It appears from this correspondence with Mr. Gladstone that Morley was very nearly put up for a bye-election at Nottingham. The local Liberal Caucus, he says, ' decided by 27 votes, against 24 for me, in favour of my namesake ', Arnold Morley, who was elected. Mr. Gladstone had lent Morley a batch of Cobden's letters. After reading them, says the biographer, " I have ventured to form a strong opinion that Cobden was right in refusing office in 1859 ". In ordinary circumstances, Morley used to say, a Member of Parliament should be ready to accept office when his party is in power. Cobden once told a relative (who told me) that if Lord John Russell had been Prime Minister instead of Palmerston, he would have accepted a Cabinet post in 1859.

The new editorship imposed a tremendous daily strain on Morley ; but in the autumn he and Mr. Yates Thompson were lucky enough to find in W. T. Stead an assistant editor who possessed just those qualities which the editor lacked—a passion for news, and an instinct for the sensations that sell an evening paper. Stead was editor of the *Northern Echo* (Darlington) when he received this call to London. " He was invaluable,"

wrote Morley in his *Recollections*, "abounding in journalistic resource, eager in convictions, infinitely bold, candid, laborious in surefooted mastery of all the facts, and bright with a cheerfulness and geniality that no difference of opinion between us and none of the passing embarrassments of the day could ever for a moment damp. His extraordinary vigour and spirit made other people seem wet blankets, sluggish, creatures of moral *défaillance*." Stead, he adds, succeeding later to the editorial chair, and so sailing under his own flag, "became for a season the most powerful journalist in the whole island".

Like most character sketches in the *Recollections*, this of Stead wants the spice that enlivened Morley's conversational portraits. But then, as understudy at the office of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in Northumberland Street, Stead's wayward emotions were under restraint. Later on he became a victim of morbid sensationalism:

> Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Read 'journalists' for 'wits', and the couplet applies to the later Stead, whom a colossal egoism and an unwholesome greed for notoriety drove from excess to excess, until at last he fancied himself to be possessed of supernatural powers.

A more impressionable man never lived, and the impressions which seven years afterwards he wrote down of his chief at the *Pall Mall* office are fresh and vivid. According to Stead, Morley was far from being the austere and unsympathetic figure of popular repute:

I may be utterly wrong in my estimate of Mr. Morley's character, but I have at least had opportunities of studying it superior to those possessed by almost any one else. For nearly three years I was his assistant while he edited the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and between an editor and an assistant editor there is necessary the closest intimacy. Every morning we used to discuss the world, and all the things therein, for half an hour, the range being as wide as the

universe, while the immediate objective point was narrowed down to the practical duty of bringing out the *Pall Mall Gazette*. We differed about everything; from the Providential government of the world to the best way of displaying the latest news in an "Extra Special"; and the strenuous conflict of opinion with which the day began led Mr. Morley at one time to postpone our talk till the paper was out. "It took more out of him, that half hour," he said, "than all the rest of the day's work." But the postponement did not last; our morning palavers were soon resumed, and continued unto the end. Nor was it only at the office that I had the best of opportunities for observation and study. When I first came up to London I enjoyed Mr. Morley's hospitality as host for several weeks; and after I settled at Wimbledon we were for several years near neighbours and good friends. Not only did I see Mr. Morley every day—for three years—but I was with him at the two most momentous crises of his history. I was by his side through the whole campaign against Coercion, which led to the retirement of Mr. Forster; and afterwards, when he decided to abandon journalism for the House of Commons, I had constant discussions with him upon the rival claims of the old career and the new.

Stead discovered in Morley a fiery and poetic temperament, but few people knew this, because he seldom let himself go. "He exercises a stern restraint upon himself, which is so habitual, that few but his intimates suspect how much 'fire he has got in his belly'—to quote the familiar Carlylean phrase which used to be constantly in use at the *Pall Mall* when Mr. Morley was there, as the phrase for measuring the vital force which dwells in man."

Stead praised his old chief's candour and openness of mind—he would readily admit change of opinion.

When he asked me to come up to London and work with him, I diligently read up the old *Fortnightlies* to see whether or not we were likely to agree. I told him that I thought we agreed very well, with one important exception. "You mean religion," said he. "No," I replied; "I think we

should agree there, whenever the subject becomes practical. The subject on which we disagree is the Contagious Diseases Acts. You have written strongly in their favour. I am dead against them." "Oh," said Mr. Morley, "but I am also against them. That article you referred to was written many years ago. It was a mistake, I have changed my mind, and I am entirely with you on that point." . . . He was never ashamed to admit that he had changed his mind, or had abandoned an untenable position.

Not that his mind changed easily or quickly. He was the very opposite of a volatile politician. Nor had he "nimbleness of mind". People in 1890 imagined he was always a Home Ruler. "He was no such thing. He was, on the contrary, while always sympathetic with Ireland, not fully converted to Home Rule until 1885. During the election for Westminster in 1880, he declared himself as frankly against a Parliament on College Green as if he had been a Liberal Unionist in 1890. During the whole of his editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette* he never once committed the paper to Home Rule." Stead recalled the last leader he ever wrote in the paper. It was entitled 'Three Years of Liberal Administration', and appeared in August 1883. Here are a few sentences: "That is what England and Scotland have to face. Given popular or parliamentary governments in the first place, and government by rival parties in the other, how is a disaffected province to be managed? That is the question which even yet, and even soon, may be fatal to Liberal unity and many a political reputation." On reading it Stead shrugged his shoulders. "It was a dismal prophecy, but it became true much more rapidly than he expected."

During his editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette* Stead thought that Ireland was the only thing in which Morley was passionately interested. "I frankly confess he sometimes bored me to death with Ireland, and I see from one of the letters which he sent me from Scotland, that when I followed his example in keeping Ireland to

the front, he, as a reader, was equally bored. It is so different whether we read articles, or whether we write them, and of course it depends a good deal upon the writer."

However that may be, Stead insisted that Morley came slowly to the great change which Gladstone reached so 'nimbly'. Assuredly he was no supple journalist, no opportunist in the ordinary sense of the word :

> This lack of nimbleness of mind was a drawback to Mr. Morley as editor of a daily paper. He was not a born journalist. He was deficient in the range of his sympathies. No power on earth could command Mr. Morley's interest in three-fourths of the matter that fills the papers. He is in intellect an aristocrat. He looked down with infinite contempt on most of the trifles that interest the British tomfool, as the general reader used sometimes to be playfully designated when considerations of management clashed with editorial aspirations. He had no eye for news, and he was totally devoid of the journalistic instinct. To him a newspaper was simply a pulpit from which he could preach, and, as a preacher, like all of us who are absorbed in our own ideas, he was apt at times to be a little monotonous.
>
> During his stay at the *Pall Mall Gazette* he did many things fairly well ; but the only subject on which he left his mark was Ireland. He was the public exponent of the policy which Mr. Chamberlain, with the secret sympathy of Mr. Gladstone, was upholding in the Cabinet against Mr. Forster. There were many who baited the much tried Chief Secretary, but it was Mr. Morley whose rapier thrust gave the *coup de grâce* to his ministerial career.

In this lively portraiture of the editor dictator by his chief of staff we find ourselves contrasting the two outstanding types of journalist.

> Of Mr. Morley, as editor, in his personal relations I cannot speak too enthusiastically. He was no doubt very often a chilly frost on the exuberance of my more youthful enthusiasm. "No Dithyrambs, s'il vous plaît," he would remark drily, as he returned me my article with all the most telling

passages struck out. He was a great stickler for severity of style, and restraint and sobriety of expression. He was always down on my besetting temptation to bawl when a word in an ordinary tone would be sufficient. But there was never any trouble in the office. He believed in authority and I believed as implicitly in obedience. No one ever took liberties with Mr. Morley. Every one went more or less in awe of him. When the thunder-cloud gathered in his eyes, or the gout was prowling about his extremities, we all minded our p's and q's at the *Pall Mall Gazette*. But we all liked him; and for my part, I had never worked with any one before with whom comradeship was at once such a pleasure and such a stimulant. I must have been an unusual trial to him in those days, with my exuberance and my fads, and what he considered my unwarrantable superstition. I always distrusted Mr. Chamberlain, with whom he was hand in glove. I was a sworn advocate of the Russian alliance, while, as he said, he never wrote a leader on Russia which he did not wish to finish with *sic semper tyrannis*; but there is no need to multiply the points upon which we were in diametrical antagonism.

When the chief was away on holiday he had to leave Stead in charge of the paper, and some extracts from his letters on such occasions appear in these reminiscences. A few express approval, but most betray consternation. Stead was always praising Russia and the Czar. In one letter Morley says: "You will not be surprised if I go to work pretty steadily to rub off the Slavophil label." Again: "Your article to-night turned my hair grey." A note at the end of a holiday ran thus: "Your article to-night rather takes my breath away. On the whole I think I may as well take command to-morrow." It is just possible that Morley found the turbulence of Parnell's House of Commons comparatively easeful after more than two years in a newspaper office which bubbled over with the indiscretions of his brilliant, restless, irrepressible lieutenant.

But when all is said, the arrival of the Darlington man must have lifted a weight from Morley's shoulders

in the office. Stead was a practical journalist, with a keen scent for news, active, industrious; and he helped to keep the ship afloat on a difficult voyage.

A letter to Grace Morley refers to Stead's arrival:

Athenæum, *October* 12, 1880.—You will know that my new lieutenant has arrived. He is a queer child of nature, but a nice and good fellow, and he will, moreover, be most useful. My work is much lightened by his arrival—but I am not exactly a man of leisure for all that.

Last night I dined with Chamberlain and Bright. You may guess that we had a good political talk. The world is very troubled just now, and Ireland is supposed to be in a most dangerous condition. But I daresay she will pull through.

In the half session that remained after the new Parliament met, several useful measures were passed. But a grave error was committed. Partly to please the Queen, Sir Bartle Frere's recall was postponed until the end of July, and the Cabinet decided not to revoke the annexation of the Transvaal, which most of them had denounced during the General Election campaign.

In Ireland the Government's policy was less culpable but not less unfortunate. Agrarian distress and disorder had been increasing. Forster, to restrain the Irish landlords from abusing their power of evicting tenants, introduced a Compensation for Disturbance Bill. In the teeth of Tory obstruction, led by Lord Randolph Churchill, it was passed through the House of Commons; but at the instance of Lord Beaconsfield—one of his last and worst performances—the Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords. Morley, of course, supported the Bill, and persistently opposed the alternative policy of suppressing agrarian crime by coercion. At first the line he took was not distasteful to Gladstone. That is abundantly clear from the wording of a letter which the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote to the Prime Minister at the end of October:

It is naturally very gratifying to me to find that what I said meets with your approval, and it is no small encouragement to me in my new work. The difficulties in resisting the cry for Coercion in a London paper are very considerable —for London is as usual far too ready to cry out against any policy which can be suspected of springing from sympathy with the Irish people. So far, however, all is going extremely well with us. But I confess that I am rather despondent about making public opinion about Ireland more generous, candid, and impartial. However, one must try.

But after the rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill things went from bad to worse in Ireland. Parnell, soon to be dubbed its Uncrowned King, defended the boycotting of those who took the farms of evicted tenants, as a more charitable process than shooting. But the boycott did not supersede shooting. Forster turned from conciliation to coercion, and at the Guildhall banquet in November Mr. Gladstone pronounced that the maintenance of order and security must be anterior to reform. It is plain from the *Fortnightly* of that month that its editor was already nervous about Irish policy, but he spent most of his ammunition against a new crusade on behalf of the Greeks, who were seething with territorial ambition. "Byron", he wrote, "has thrown over them the glamour of his poetic genius; education and association have invested their ordinary nomenclature with a certain significance and charm. But the notion of risking a war in order that the Hellenic kingdom may acquire a frontier after its own heart is entirely alien to the enormous body of Englishmen."

This danger passed, and his December summary was devoted to Ireland, the hint of coercion having become practically a certainty. In his double editorship Morley strove hard to turn public opinion from Force to Remedy. A Land Bill rather than Coercion was his policy, and he knew that it was being pressed in the Cabinet by Bright and Chamberlain. In the *Fortnightly* he wrote: "The policy of coercion involves considera-

Book III.

tions not only of expediency, but of principle, and that is the reason why it is unflinchingly opposed by men who think as Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain think." Again: "You may summarily deprive as many persons as you will of their liberty; but the business of governing Ireland still remains." Should Forster's policy be adopted Morley thought that Bright, Chamberlain, and Sir Charles Dilke might leave the Government. "The true and abiding remedy for Irish troubles lies not in extraordinary measures of repression but in just measures of reform."

In the January *Fortnightly* he was again occupied with Ireland, urging land reforms and deprecating coercion. After quoting Burke for the presumption that, when discontents are prevalent, there must be something amiss with the Constitution or the Government, he winds up with a gloomy, but not too gloomy, presage: "Meanwhile there seems to be every likelihood of another Ireland being created for us in the Transvaal." His bitter comments on the Government's South African policy were about to be justified.

On January 23 he wrote to his sister in a rather peevish mood. It was bitterly cold, and he had promised to speak at Birmingham; but—

> I have no fancy for being snowed up for four-and-twenty hours. My speech is simmering in my head—and ought to go pretty well, if my wits and voice are not frozen up. Morison lunched with me yesterday—in a very Morisonian (*i.e.* fidgetty) humour; Meredith came to see me the day before, very nice about all of us, but like a strong-voiced, crabbed old man about other people, especially about his better half. Marriott I dined with on Thursday at Mosley's, purring and prosperous as usual. . . . I had a long interview with Gladstone on Monday. His cold was not gone, and he kept himself warm with a red anti-macassar which he clutched from off the sofa—looking not at all like a prime minister. Things look very bad. Heaven knows what will be the end of it. I wish we were well through with it all, and to-

morrow were mid-summer day. I am looking forward to it already.

Next day (January 24) Coercion was introduced in the form of a Protection of Persons and Property Bill by Forster. But Irish obstruction was too strong, and after a forty-one hours' sitting it became necessary to frame and pass new Rules of Procedure in order to get the Bill through the House of Commons. It was a difficult time for the editor of the *Pall Mall*:

February 11th. MY DEAREST GRACE—I know not when I last wrote to you, for the whirl of my existence carries me out of all sight and memory of myself. It was, I believe, before I went to Birmingham, which was towards the last days of January. My visit to that famous city—if I must begin at that—was very short indeed. I arrived at 3.30 in the afternoon—had a nap in my room at Mr. Dixon's—went to the meeting—made a very good speech which was well received, and was off by 9.30 the next morning. The whole expedition, coming on the top of urgent and ceaseless work at my office, was very fatiguing, and paid me out for two or three days afterwards.

Then came all the monstrous troubles in the House of Commons. You may imagine the stir and agitation of the Clubs, the newspapers, and one's various friends. When I look back upon it, I almost wonder how we all kept our heads tolerably cool. It was not easy to have to make up one's mind about great events at five minutes' notice. But I got through it all, and people tell me I am looking the better for it. Of course the trouble is not over, and there is plenty more to come of one sort and another.

I have not been dining out so very, very much—twice a week or so. Last Saturday I was at a pretty pleasant man's party at Lord Derby's, but I was still more at my ease at a *tête-à-tête* dinner at Chamberlain's the next day. We have lots of cards for great assemblies, but R. never goes, and I very seldom.

Last night we had a regular outing. Rose and I went and dined at Miss Cobden's; at 7 o'clock a brougham took us to the Lyceum, where I had taken a box. Miss Cobden,

Book III.

Maggie, and we filled it up, along with F. Harrison who joined us. We saw the Cup and the Corsicans. I expected to be disgusted by Irving, but his acting in the Cup is more absolutely barbarous, outrageous, and affronting than anything I ever saw in all my theatrical life. The Corsicans amused me much more. I loathe Irving, but I am very partial to ghost scenes and duels with plenty of sticking in them. On the whole, it passed the time. I am almost too immersed in work to be able to amuse myself. Stead says I am very easily bored; 'tis true.

A few days before he had applied to Frederic Harrison for an article on Carlyle, on whose death he had written a hasty 'Vale'; but Harrison made excuses. Morley replied:

PUTNEY, *Feb.* 8.—Your reasons for shirking your plain duty of saying something about Carlyle in my next No. will not hold water. My poor 'Vale' was flung off in half an hour amid the clatter of the office, and the ceaseless interruptions of the printer's devils. I could not endure to read it after it was finished. For the *F.R.* I would fain have something rather worthier—and I know that this something is stirring in your mind, and only needs to be dictated and thrown on to paper. Pray do it. You really ought.

In January, as we have seen, Coercion had become the official policy of the Government; but Morley went on denouncing it: "To brandish the sword in the face of a country so inflamed by agitation as Ireland is said to be now, may give a sinister pleasure to a certain number of heady persons among us; but it is not a policy." About this time (February 1881) he began to concentrate his fire on the Chief Secretary:

Mr. Forster has brought in not only a Coercion Bill, but an extremely severe Coercion Bill. His whole demeanour and attitude have exposed him to the charge of holding the truly absurd position that if a bad thing is necessary, the more of the badness of the thing that you have the better. . . . What is the advantage of having an Irish Secretary with the pro-

fessions of a Wilberforce, if he brings in a Bill on the maxims of a Castlereagh ?

Before the end of February the Coercion Bill was law. The *Pall Mall* did not conceal its wrath, and rebuked Mr. Forster for his "rather uncouth exultation".

Then came another blow to Liberals. On February 27, two days after the passing of the Coercion Bill, the Boers defeated a British force at Majuba Hill.[1] Gladstone's Government, which had decided to recall Frere and change its policy before the Boer rising, resisted the cry for revenge and granted autonomy to the Boers, much to the satisfaction of their Radical supporters, who from the first had expected Gladstone to reverse the Beaconsfield policy.

When I was with him at Hawarden in the autumn of 1899, exploring the Gladstone archives, the South African War broke in upon Morley's labours, and he went over the ground from the beginning. The chapter called "Majuba" in his *Life of Gladstone* is a masterpiece of critical narrative and exposition. The errors of the three Colonial Secretaries, Carnarvon, Hicks Beach, and Kimberley, the erroneous information and consistently bad advice which they received from British agents (their "blind guides") in South Africa about the feelings and attitude of the Boers, and the "loitering unwisdom" of Lord Kimberley's diplomacy are recounted with a diligence and acumen only less admirable than the fine passage in which he sums up for the policy of a magnanimous peace against "the galling argument" that Gladstone's Cabinet "had conceded to three defeats what they had refused to ten times as many petitions, memorials, remonstrances"; and that we had "given to men with arms in their hands what we refused to their peaceful prayers". The argument for the Majuba

[1] It was a small affair. "The General [Colley] who was responsible for the disaster paid the penalty with his life. Some ninety others fell and sixty were taken prisoners" (Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, Book VIII. ch. iii.).

Book III.

policy was well put by Chamberlain in June 1881. Here is Morley's version :

Some have argued that we ought to have brought up an overwhelming force, to demonstrate that we were able to beat them, before we made peace. Unfortunately demonstrations of this species easily turn into provocations, and talk of this kind mostly comes from those who believe, not that peace was made in the wrong way, but that a peace giving their country back to the Boers ought never to have been made at all, on any terms or in any way. This was not the point from which either Cabinet or parliament started. The government had decided that annexation had been an error. The Boers had proposed inquiry. The government assented on condition that the Boers dispersed. Without waiting a reasonable time for a reply, our general was worsted in a rash and trivial attack. Did this cancel our proffered bargain ? The point was simple and unmistakable, though party heat at home, race passion in the colony, and our everlasting human proneness to mix up different questions, and to answer one point by arguments that belong to another, all combined to produce a confusion of mind that a certain school of partisans have traded upon ever since. Strange in mighty nations is moral cowardice, disguised as Roman pride. All the more may we admire the moral courage of the minister. For moral courage may be needed even where aversion to bloodshed fortunately happens to coincide with high prudence and sound policy of state.[1]

* * * * *

Let us diverge for a moment from politics and statecraft to life at Berkeley Lodge. Morley hated untidiness in his own study or anywhere else. He liked to sit down to write with a clean desk and a clean shirt. But the mixture of *Pall Mall*, *Fortnightly*, *Cobden*, and English Men of Letters Series was evidently too much for him at times. To his sister Grace, March 6, Putney :

It is nearing twelve, and all the family have gone to bed, after helping me to tidy up my room, which was in sore need

[1] Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, Book VIII. ch. iii.

of that process. There is now a small mountain of manuscripts neatly packed up on the cabinet, with pleasant billet-doux to match, 'regrets'—'cannot avail'—'kind enough to send'—and all the rest of it. If I could only get the Cobden MSS. cleared out in the same way, I should feel myself tolerably free and happy. But that is not yet. . . .

The Steads, as perhaps you know, have taken the house on the hill side close to Wimbledon church, and overlooking the lake and park. They pay £135, but will have to do a good deal of repairing. On the whole I think they are uncommonly lucky. We have been carrying on mighty works in our own garden; draining the lawn, making a high terrace, and otherwise preparing ourselves for a cheerful summer. At present all is unfinished, and very muddy and puddly it looks. . . . Guy ought to have been here to-day, but unluckily he forfeited his exeat by talking in the bedroom, which is regarded as a grave sin in those parts. . . .

I bear my work very well—including the dining part of it, which is certainly the most trying part. I have been ruining myself in Green's broughams—but they enable me to stay quietly in my own house until 7.20, and to be back by 11.15 or so—which is pleasant. The Thompsons started on Thursday for Constantinople, and are to-day twenty-four hours out from Marseilles on their way.

The April number of the *Fortnightly* opened with an editorial on 'England and Ireland'—a severe indictment of English rule in Ireland, enforced by apposite quotations from Burke, Arthur Young, and less familiar authorities. Concessions had usually come too late. "Even in her most gracious moments England has always been harsh and narrow to Ireland." It was time to govern Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas: "Until we have reshaped the whole system of Irish government, so as to leave room for an independent and spontaneous growth of Irish civilisation along its own lines, Ireland will remain what she is now, miserable herself, and the torment and despair of others." In April the Government followed up the Coercion Bill with a Land Bill,

which Morley studied with great care and elucidated in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

Whatever time he could spare from journalism, politics, and society was bestowed on his biography of Cobden. One chapter, " On Cobden's First Pamphlets ", came out in the May *Fortnightly*. An editorial note on Lord Beaconsfield's death must have disappointed Morley's readers : " Lord Beaconsfield's personal character and history deserve, as they are certain one day to find, a disinterested analysis which is not possible at a moment when the fire of political passion is still at red heat about events in which he was an actor." Perhaps he felt as acutely as Gladstone the difficulty in this case of applying the maxim ' de mortuis nil nisi bonum '. Long afterwards it was suggested that he should paint the official portrait of Disraeli. He appreciated the honour, but declined it without hesitation, because (as he told me) a biographer ought to have more sympathy for his subject than he felt for the character of Disraeli.

At this time Chamberlain, aided by Sir Thomas Farrer, then Permanent Secretary at the Board of Trade, and one of the ablest economists in the public service, was upholding the Free Trade system against ' Fair Traders ', who disguised their desire for retaliatory protective tariffs under the formula of Reciprocity, and called in aid the treaty which Cobden had negotiated with the French in 1860. This induced Morley to study the subject ; and in the June *Fortnightly* he published an instructive article ' On the Policy of Commercial Treaties '. Negotiations for renewing the French treaty were then in progress. Seeing that there was no element of protection or discrimination in Cobden's policy, his biographer found no difficulty in defending it, on the one hand, against the Protectionists who represented it as a sign of grace, and on the other, against the purists who insisted that it was a lapse from Free Trade orthodoxy. As the tariff reductions of 1860 extended to all the world, they not only increased our trade with France, but with

other countries as well, and helped to establish the "most favoured nation" principle. He was careful to show that the success of Cobden's treaty afforded no argument to those who had begun to advocate a national Customs Union for the whole British Empire. "Freedom of internal commerce, whether within an island or over a wide area, is still not the same thing as universal freedom of exchange. The mother country has no interest in going into a Customs Union with her colonies, with the idea of giving them any advantage or supposed advantage in trading with her over foreign countries."

In July (1881) the *Fortnightly* opened with an important editorial—"Conciliation with Ireland"—pleading that Ireland should be governed according to Irish ideas. The text is a striking remark made by Charles James Fox in 1797—"I would have the whole Irish government regulated by Irish notions and Irish prejudices". Morley did not apply republican principles to Ireland, but he found a reason why the Irish people were not attached to the monarchy:

> Every one knows how infinitely, in Great Britain itself, the monarchy is strengthened by the personal presence of the Queen, and her sons and daughters. . . . If Queen Victoria were to withdraw from this country, say to Ottawa or Melbourne, as some of her ancestors used to threaten to withdraw to Hanover, how much longer does any one think that British loyalty would last? Then why do you expect this sort of loyalty from Ireland? The one part of the three kingdoms where the royal family might do the most real and substantial good to the union of the realm, is exactly that to which, as it seems, no Minister ventures to urge that they ought to go.

In education, English and Scottish susceptibilities were consulted, but *not* Irish. "In England and Scotland we cherish our own denominational system of education, and bolster it with grants; in Ireland alone, where they need higher education most sorely, we say that they shall

have no aid from us unless it be strictly undenominational." Mr. John Dillon has told me that this article caused no small stir in Ireland, and gave an unmistakable impetus to the Home Rule movement.

In August, after denouncing the new Irish Land Bill as ruinous, the House of Lords passed it almost intact. By this time Morley was more than ready for a holiday. Indeed, he had left town before this success for his policy of conciliation was achieved. In a letter to Grace at the beginning of July he announced: "We go to our farm in the Highlands on the 26th. I hope you'll join us there in the course of the time. At Hexham you're half-way." He was starting off for the annual *P.M.G.* dinner at the Crystal Palace, "a horrid affair with speeches, glees, etc." On July 30 he wrote again:

> And I, at *last*, have begun my holiday. I wrote my last leading article this forenoon, and walked out of my office for the blessed space of two months. I don't realise it yet, but I soon shall, I daresay. It has been a royal piece of work, and I really don't know that I am much the worse for it. Last week certainly the heat was trying, but no harm seems to have come to me.
>
> I need not say that we are all full of our outing. Your other correspondents will have told you all the details. We have an omnibus from here to Euston on Tuesday; a carriage that will hold us all, including the three servants, and that will take us right through to Kingussie. . . .
>
> To-morrow Rose and I go to dine with Chamberlain at the Star and Garter—which is very pleasant, tho' it has stood in the way of my going down into the country to Ld. Aberdeen's to spend the Sunday with Gladstone. The last-named man has shown himself a regular hero in the way in which he has fought the Land Bill. I fancy he is rather fagged, all the same, and no wonder.

The next letter to his sister is dated August 9, Killiehuntly, Kingussie:

> The house and its belongings are as nice as possible; new furniture, all very clean, and plenty of room. We are 3 or 4

miles from the village, and are as solitary as Pitfield, save that the farmer from whom we hold lives close by. The prospect is very fine in its own way—great gaunt rolling moorlands, but not so *pretty* or taking as our dear Patterdale. One glen close to our gate is indeed as beautiful as it can be, and the stream (about three times as big as Girsdale) is a constant delight. The air, however, is the great thing; it is exhilarating in the most wonderful degree; fresh, bright, clear—all that one wants to give one tone. Of course as different from the Lakes as can be. It is really first rate; that, the quiet, and the distance from *Pall Mall*—quite make it worth while to traverse all those scores of miles.

Craig is four or five miles off; but we see him pretty often, and to-morrow we all go on a picnic together—making 14 or 15 in all. I have got leave to fish in the stream.

I fell to work on Cobden last Friday, and had the satisfaction of sending off a packet of MS. this afternoon.

Though he got permission, I cannot learn or believe that Morley ever threw a fly over this or any other stream. If the gentle art furnished him with an occasional metaphor, that was all. While he was busy with Cobden in his Highland glen, the Fair Trade movement was making some headway. Another very wet harvest and foreign competition had deepened the agricultural depression. If the price of wheat could not be raised, rents must be lowered, or many tenant farmers would be ruined. James Lowther had just won North Lincoln by advocating a duty on foreign corn. Whereupon Morley wrote:

So far as ability to keep his pledges was concerned, he might as well have promised them sunshine; but whereas the veriest dolt can see that politicians have no control over the weather, distressed agriculturists may fail to see the reasons which place a corn law as far beyond the reach of our Chancellor of the Exchequer as the sun itself. The bait, however, took. The farmers rallied round the man who promised to tax the bread of the people to enable them to pay their rents to their landlords, and Mr. Lowther was returned by a majority of 471.

In this same month (October 1881) he drew attention to Arabi Pasha's threatening movement in Egypt:

> The situation is dangerous, and no one yet seems willing to propose the only real solution of the difficulty, the conversion of Egypt from a Turkish pachalic into an Oriental Belgium, whose independence and neutrality is guaranteed by all the Powers. If another Leopold could be secured for the throne of the Pharaohs, such a solution would satisfactorily solve a problem, which might at any moment involve this country in serious difficulties if not an actual war.

Another Irish crisis arrived before this warning came true. The Irish Land Act of 1881 was not acceptable to Parnell. The Land League renewed its agitation. In October Parnell and other Irish leaders were arrested under the Coercion Act and lodged in Kilmainham Gaol. They issued a No-Rent Manifesto, and the Government replied by suppressing the Land League. Morley admitted that the 'exigencies' of the situation might have justified these high-handed measures: "If we must govern Ireland in this way, it is better that the work should be done by proclamations from the Castle than by Acts of Parliament passed by an Assembly in which the voice of the Irish people is heard only to be stifled by the overwhelming majority of an hostile race." The real evil lay in the conditions which made such measures necessary. It was a difficult time for a Liberal journalist, as a letter from the Reform Club (October 17, 1881) to Mr. Gladstone may serve to show:

> I have returned to my post to-day after a long absence, which was not however exactly a vacation, as in it I wrote nearly a volume of my Cobden. It is now done, and I come back to journalism at an exciting moment.
>
> Nobody in England is more anxious than I am to place myself at the point of view of the Government; but after a general doubt on the Coercion Act it is not easy to come to express a round approval of a particular application of it. I am turning it over by day and by night, and hope to see a way to effective and warm support. The crisis for Liberal-

ism seems to me very sharp in every way, and calls for strenuous effort even from humble people like me.

The *Life of Cobden* was ready before the end of October, and took its place at once among our political classics. It is not only a superb example of literary craftsmanship; it is one of those few choice books that illuminate and ennoble politics. No man or woman, in whom public spirit is alive, can read John Morley's rendering of Richard Cobden's character and achievements without gaining inspiration, encouragement, and direction. Human society struggling up the narrow path that leads to peace and freedom must be grateful that some few of its heroic leaders have been worthily commemorated; for the prose of a genius in biography is like the poetry of the sacred bards who save their Agamemnons from the long night of oblivion. It is not enough that a Turgot or a Cobden should exhibit to their own countrymen for one all too short generation the spectacle of an unselfish statesman devoting a pure heart, a fine intellect, unsparing industry to promote enlightenment, prosperity, and happiness among mankind. They need also a Condorcet and a Morley.

Our author's preface describes the generous confidence reposed in his discretion by Mr. Cobden's family, the unwearied kindness of Mr. Bright,[1] who had abounded in helpful suggestions, and his obligations to Sir Louis Mallet, who first induced him to undertake the work. Morley told me more than once, by way of warning and exhortation, how Mallet on reading the proof sheets protested against the excessive quotations from Cobden's most interesting journal. Their weight, he said, would sink the book. Morley took his advice, and ruthlessly excised a large number of pages.

For men who seek moral guidance in public life, and believe in the possibility of progress, the book will bear

[1] The Dedication runs: "To the Right Honourable John Bright, this Memoir of his close comrade in the cause of wise, just, and sedate government is inscribed with the author's sincere respect."

Book III.

comparison with Condorcet's *Life of Turgot.* For economists and students of political science it must always be a leading authority on the history of Free Trade, and a *locus classicus* on non-intervention, disarmament, pacific diplomacy, and other close-knit policies of the Manchester School. Among our English political biographies it ranks with the lives of Macaulay and Gladstone; nor would it be easy in this field to find another competitor. In Cobden's writings, speeches, letters, and journals the author had first-rate material, and used them with wonderful skill to trace a great character and a nobly unselfish life through the national struggles and international controversies in which, from the time when he began his campaign against the Corn Laws, down to his last efforts for the holy causes of arbitration and peace, Cobden played a foremost part.

On October 24, Morley wrote to Mr. Gladstone to tell him that Miss Cobden was sending a copy of the *Life* to Hawarden. After expressing a modest fear that the narrative will seem very thin and shadowy to a prominent actor, and will give him a "poor opinion of written history, its veracity and substance", he adds: "I should have liked to be free to use some of Cobden's letters to you, but your monition on that point to Mrs. Cobden was so express that I dared not transgress it." At the same time, he tells Mr. Gladstone "how sensible I remain of your kindness in consenting to my having access to the papers, without which the work could not have been undertaken".

A letter of approval from Mr. Gladstone brought another from the author on October 25:

> You are a lenient critic and I am willing to hope on such authority as yours that what I have written may prove useful to good causes.
>
> Your position in the Cabinet from 1859 to the time of Cobden's death was not a matter on which I have presumed to offer any criticism. It seems to me that Cobden was sometimes almost reckless in his aversion to Lord Palmerston;

and this aversion made him impatient and even censorious towards anybody who lent Palmerston any countenance.

What is curious to me is the bid which Disraeli made at that time for the Manchester Party by his denunciation of armaments. In fact on more occasions than one he used language that might have come from Cobden himself as to pacific negotiations and non-intervention.

The fame and success of this book, which was soon to be circulated in a popular edition, did much to spread Morley's influence among Liberals, especially in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and the North, where Richard Cobden and John Bright were the household gods of political nonconformity and of that sturdy individualistic type of democratic radicalism which believes in self-help rather than State aid.

CHAPTER XII

THE TWO SPHINXES AND A VALEDICTORY—1882

Book III.

With the publication of *Cobden* in the autumn of 1881 the period of journalism and authorship was closing. In the spring of 1882 Morley unhorsed a Minister; by the end of the year he was committed to contest a vacancy, which promised him a fairly safe seat and an opportunity of testing his parliamentary powers. He remained editor of the *Fortnightly* until the summer of 1882, when a controversy with the publishers, Messrs. Chapman and Hall, brought this important episode to an end. After another year, finding that his parliamentary work and ambitions could not be reconciled with responsibility for a daily newspaper, he resigned his editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

His political interests in 1882 were divided between Egypt and Ireland—the two Sphinxes whose dark riddles perplexed, and in three years' time brought to grief, Mr. Gladstone's Second Administration.

That old fable of the Sphinx, Sea Beast, half woman, half lion—symbolical of the rising of the Nile, while the sun was in Leo and Virgo—was interpreted by Bacon to represent the Riddles of Science, whom the ignorant regarded as a Monster. It was always a favourite image of Morley's for the two great contemporary riddles, which baffled and wrecked the Liberal Party on the rocks of Imperialism and Coercion. In Greek Mythology the Sphinx murdered the Thebans who tried

to guess her riddle. Oedipus guessed it, and the Sphinx put herself to death. If the Liberal leaders had followed Morley's line the Egyptian and Irish riddles might have been unravelled, and the two monsters which ate up their majority might have been slain. But to most Boeotian Liberals in the early 'eighties these two problems, for which our Oedipus had found solutions, seemed hopelessly incomprehensible. They were puzzled, as Baconian science puzzled their Puritan ancestors. Good party-men, they groped their way with mistrustful loyalty in the wake of a perplexed, distracted, and vacillating Cabinet.

Lord Randolph Churchill—whose purpose in life as leader of the Fourth Party was to embarrass the Government—said there were only two public questions, Ireland and Egypt. Readers of parliamentary debates and newspapers will feel that this was especially true of the year 1882, which saw the Kilmainham Treaty, the resignation of Forster, the murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the Bombardment of Alexandria, and the consequent resignation of John Bright.

The Egyptian Question was at first only a branch of the Turkish Question, until the Suez Canal made it, in the eyes of most amateur and some professional strategists, a branch also of the Defence of India problem. But the principal factor in precipitating the crisis of 1882 was Egyptian finance. Ismail Pasha, the ruler of Egypt, had run up a huge debt to foreign bondholders, which he endeavoured to pay by squeezing and plundering Egyptians. Arabi Pasha put himself at the head of a popular revolt. The Egyptian bondholders were alarmed. Sir Wilfrid Lawson told of a City man who put the case in a nutshell: "What we want is 'Unifieds' [the principal Egyptian security] at eighty." In June the Tory Party took up the cry for intervention. The Government hesitated and then—when France stood aside—took a plunge not morally distinguishable from the imperialistic adventures of the Beaconsfield adminis-

tration which it had displaced. On July 11 the British Fleet bombarded Alexandria. But intervention could not stop there. The policy went on, in spite of Radical criticism, until Arabi was overthrown at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Thus was British control established over Egypt.

From the beginning of the year Morley had watched developments with uneasy vigilance. He welcomed the fall of Gambetta in February; for Gambetta had been projecting a military expedition to Egypt, and "his continuance in power was not likely to conduce to the peace of Europe". There were signs in England of resurgent jingoism, and he rejoiced that the Channel Tunnel Scheme had been dropped; for "our susceptibility to scares, panics, and chauvinistic fevers would be indefinitely increased by the annihilation of the silver streak". How diligently he followed Egyptian affairs is evident from "Egyptian Policy: A Retrospect", which he wrote in June for the July *Fortnightly*. Starting from February 1881 with the revolt of the Khedive's military officers, he shows how Arabi Pasha had become an uncrowned Pharaoh—an Egyptian Parnell—and traces the course of events down to the despatch of British ironclads to Alexandria, where riots had broken out which endangered foreign life and property. He admits that Great Britain has substantial interests in Egypt. There was the Suez Canal; Egyptian cotton was important to Lancashire; and so on. But existing mischiefs might be aggravated by intervention:

> The present writer has no turn for the part of amateur diplomatist, and it is not for him to specify the precise way in which the difficulties in Egypt are either now or ultimately to be solved. But it is worth while for any one who accepts the doctrine of non-intervention as the right guide for a country bearing so enormous a burden of scattered responsibilities as Great Britain to take stock for himself of the limits which existing circumstances may set to its application in a given case. . . . Until some system is devised which fulfils

the programme not only of "Egypt for the Egyptians", but "Egypt by the Egyptians", for so long we shall find ourselves plunging deeper into entanglements. . . . But in view of the practical exigencies and many untold complications of the moment, we may be obliged to avert greater evils and more formidable complications by lending our support to a temporary makeshift. The question cannot be settled by the heroics of first principles.

There was a danger, he thought, that Lord Granville's diplomacy might bring on a quarrel with France. More allowance ought to have been made for French susceptibilities.

After the bombardment of Alexandria the *Fortnightly* makes out the best case it can for the action of the British Cabinet on the ground that it was necessary to save Egypt from anarchy by putting down Arabi's insurrection. Bright's retirement (July 17) should have come earlier, or not at all. But Morley disclaimed intervention as strongly as Bright:

The important point is whether Mr. Bright's retirement implies a drift in the Government towards the assumption of new responsibilities of a permanent kind in Egypt. If that should prove to have been the ground for his resignation, then evil days are in store for Ministers and the country. But there is little reason for apprehension on this head. Mr. Bright's own teaching, backed as it has been, like all true teaching, by circumstances and the course of events, has had too wide an effect on public opinion for this to be within a measurable distance of possibility to any government calling itself Liberal.

Any attempt to convert Egypt into another India must be strenuously resisted. "Annexation of territory that in no sense belongs to us, extension of empire, multiplication of responsibilities which are already heavier than we can successfully discharge—such a policy as this will certainly be resisted by one portion of the Liberal party."

The October *Fortnightly*—the last which Morley edited—records the defeat of Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir, and continues to deprecate annexation :

> The probability is that when the English Government has prepared a scheme for the future administration of Egypt, it will be submitted without reserve to the consideration of the interested powers. Any such scheme to give satisfaction to public opinion in this country must provide for the development of Egyptian autonomy, the limitation of the legalised anarchy occasioned by the different jurisdictions, the imposition of taxation upon European colonists, and in short for the Government of Egypt, so far as it is practicable, by the Egyptians and for the Egyptians.

The Concert of Europe should be able to assist in this task.

Many more pages might be added about Morley's views on Egypt. We shall see later how tenaciously he resisted the progress of intervention and the enlargement of British responsibilities, when new pretexts or opportunities for expansion offered themselves to the military missionaries of Empire. In the *Life of Gladstone* the problem, as it stood in the 'eighties, is surveyed with a discerning sympathy for the extraordinary difficulties of the situation which drew Mr. Gladstone so reluctantly into his unfortunate dealings with the Egyptian Sphinx.

Meanwhile in Parliament Ireland was giving the Government far more trouble than Egypt. It is said that half the divisions during the session of 1882 were connected with Irish matters. The Parnellites had studied House of Commons procedure to some purpose, and so skilled were Parnell's lieutenants in the art of obstruction that the absence of their chief in Kilmainham Gaol did not much lighten the task of legislation. Morley began to think there was no alternative to the paralysis of Parliament but the closure—a device very distasteful to old parliamentary hands who valued unlimited freedom of debate. He wrote gloomily of parliamentary institutions at home and abroad : " Everywhere there is

dissatisfaction with the working or the construction of the constitutional machine, everywhere friction seems to be increasing, and in many places Parliamentary Government threatens to come to a standstill altogether." At Westminster the danger was "excessive loquacity", which would have to be curbed by the closure. But he did not regard closure as a remedy for Ireland any more than Coercion. "The Coercion Act", he declared in March, "has absolutely failed."

In March and April, as we learn from Morley's letters to his sister, politics were stormy and politicians agitated. He bore it all, he says, "uncommonly well", and was very busy. Among other diversions, he recounts a dinner with his old friend Charles Austin, "who was very pleasant and lively"; a night at the theatre with Chamberlain "to see 'The Manager', one of the most absolutely idiotic things I ever saw"; a day with Courtney; and an interview with a deputation of Liberals from Newcastle. On March 31, after purchasing a horse and phaeton, he was at work on a Rochdale Address, "which I wish at the devil a hundred times a day. It will spoil my Easter holiday. I leave Rochdale the same night and reach home in time for breakfast. Decidedly, I am made of iron or catgut. You will read 30 pp. (!) of mine in the new *Fortnightly*—not a bad article either. Luckily I have been cutting dinners this week. I met Gladstone and Lord Derby last week: the latter is great friends with me."

His preparations for Rochdale and his visit to that centre of Radicalism proved sheer waste of time. What he says about it in a birthday letter to his sister—after his wrath had had time to cool—is decidedly amusing:

> My Rochdale visit was a fiasco. The people were bunglers—had fixed the wrong time—made no preparations—and ergo there was no meeting. At the eleventh hour they postponed it—*after* I had the trouble of the journey down. I took it very philosophically; but I am bound to say that if, like the Prophet, I had had a supply of Bears in the wood, decidedly

the animals would have had an executive committee for supper on Saturday evening.

On April 30 he tells her that he is avoiding engagements, because "the press of work just now, and especially the anxiety of the Irish business which is at a crisis—needs all my faculties". Nevertheless, he had found time to spend a day in going over the great gun factory at Woolwich Arsenal:

> Sir John Adye took me down, and I was taken over the whole place by the various heads of departments. They fired one of the great guns for my benefit. It is a wonderful place altogether, and my visit was both interesting and useful.

Coercion in Ireland had certainly failed. Forster, a fighting Quaker, had gained the nickname of "Buckshot Forster"; but he had failed to pacify the country. Many parts of it remained in the state which Lord Beaconsfield had called "veiled insurrection". Indeed, the power of arbitrary arrest that Forster's Coercion Act gave to the Irish Executive had only exasperated the people and aggravated the disorder which it was designed to extinguish. A guarded and rather laconic version of Forster's fall in the *Life of Gladstone* shows us that the Prime Minister always leaned to conciliation, and that Chamberlain was Forster's most obstinate opponent in the Cabinet. How close and intimate were Chamberlain's relations with Morley appears in a letter Morley wrote him on October 19, 1881, when the Cabinet had determined to reply to the Land League's challenge by arresting its leaders. It is printed in the *Recollections* (vol. i. pp. 174-5). An extract will show to what a quandary he had been brought:

> As you may suppose, I have not had a particularly good time of it since we parted, for the post brings me letters every day, and everybody that I meet in these dens talks as if I had got myself into an absurd fix, and were vainly trying

to wriggle myself off the hook. That would not matter a pin, if I did not really feel in a fix.

Bright wrote me a long letter (unsolicited) on Monday—perceiving the difficulty of my position, but saying that it is all my own fault for opposing Coercion in January. This makes it undeniably a ticklish thing to defend Coercion in October. I have read your letter most carefully, and shall read it again—until I seize some working point of view. . . . You are quite right in saying that we are in the same boat: there is a regular run against both Bright and you. Why now if not then? Why don't they resign? etc., etc., etc. I only hope you won't go too hot against the League at Liverpool; or at any rate that you will not lend yourself by a phrase even to this cowardly howl.

The thing must be stopped, I agree. As the Government chose Coercion, it must be stopped by that means. When one comes to explain why we only think this now, it is possible to give a good account of oneself—but it implies a sort of apologetic air which does not come very kindly, I fancy, to either of us. . . . However, we won't give up. But my painfully unstatesmanlike aversion to John Bull in a passion makes me a bad hand at this moment. Your letter has done me good.

I will certainly come on the 29th if the office will let me—even if it be only for a night.

Whatever support the *Pall Mall* gave to the Irish Executive, opposition to the policy of Coercion remained its editorial keynote. Probably by the end of March Chamberlain signified that the Cabinet was coming round to general disapproval of Forster's administration. At any rate, on April 3, Morley drew his quill, and published his famous article "A New Policy for Ireland".

A new policy, he began, was necessary, because Ministers would soon have to apply to Parliament for a renewal of the Coercion Act. After a rapid description of the evil plight of Ireland, he went on to say:

Mr. Forster expressly admitted last Monday that his policy had not succeeded, and that he had underestimated

the forces with which he had to contend. In an ordinary case, such a confession, under conditions so critical and important, might very well lead to the fall of the Ministry, and to the installation of successors prepared with another policy.

But this was ruled out; for the Conservatives had no alternative policy, and also, they would be obliged to dissolve Parliament. A new policy is therefore suggested:—(1) Deal with arrears. (2) Release Parnell, Dillon, Davitt, and other *political* suspects. (3) Try the imprisoned *criminal* suspects (perhaps 700) by a special judicial commission (without jury). (4) Quarter police or troops on disturbed districts at the expense of the inhabitants. (5) "A thorough overhauling of the administrative machinery of Dublin Castle." (6)—and here was the sting:

> It is of no avail to bring forward a new policy without a new Lord Lieutenant (or perhaps, better still, a Lord Lieutenant in Commission), and a new Chief Secretary. It is painful to say a word that sounds like disparagement of one of the most honest, devoted, and well-intentioned men that ever entered the public service. But if a general in a field loses campaign after campaign, he is recalled. The issues at stake are a million times too grave both for England and Ireland to be compromised by merely personal considerations. No amount of respect for his ability and his virtues ought to keep a Minister in a post of vital importance to the peace of the realm, when it has been seen that his ability is palpably not of the right kind, and where his very virtues do more harm than good. Mr. Forster's name has become inseparably associated with a policy that is odious in Ireland. . . . Now is the time for trying a new campaign and a new general.

Next day (April 4) the subject was resumed and the same conclusion was pressed:

> The Chief Secretary has done his best, and what he has done has turned out ill. There is no disloyalty nor dis-

respect, then, in believing that the time has come for a new diagnosis, a new prescription, and a new apothecary.

On that same day the Chief Secretary for Ireland wrote to the Prime Minister :

You may have seen an article in yesterday's *Pall Mall Gazette* urging my dismissal or resignation.

He must have felt that his position was untenable, and that a new policy must be tried by a new man ; for he straightway placed his resignation in Gladstone's hands, urging him not to be influenced by any personal feeling. His concluding words were :

In making you this request, I know that I am asking much from a Chief who has so kindly and generously stood by me, but the *Pall Mall Gazette* is right in one thing—this is no time for personal considerations.

In reply, Gladstone thanked Forster for his " most handsome letter " and urged delay, remarking that " if you go, and go on Irish grounds, surely I must go too ". If Forster had failed—which he did not admit—then " your failure, were it true, is our failure ".

Meanwhile, Parnell was anxious to get out of gaol, and ready to use his influence to bring about agrarian peace in Ireland. Mr. Chamberlain undertook to negotiate with the Irish leader through an emissary, the infamous O'Shea. Lord Cowper, the Irish Viceroy, resigned. Lord Spencer was appointed to take his place. On May 2 the Cabinet resolved that Parnell, Dillon, and Davitt should be released, and that the Coercion Bill should not be renewed. Forster dissented and resigned. As the *Pall Mall* pointed out next day, " he had no choice but to come out of the Government ". Forster—so ran Morley's comment in the *Fortnightly*—" is by the natural composition of his character ill fitted to recognise a situation of this kind. He is not versatile, flexible, or quick of apprehension ; it is not easy, perhaps it is even downright impossible, for him to alter a course to which he has once committed himself." Conse-

quently, " without supposing that wounded vanity had much to do with it ", it was easy to understand why he could not " bring himself to admit that all his toil and devotion for so many months past had really been no better than assiduous blundering and elaborated failure ".

It was expected that Chamberlain would be asked to take Forster's place; but Gladstone's choice fell on Lord Frederick Cavendish. A tragedy followed. No sooner had the new Chief Secretary arrived in Ireland, bearing with him a message of hope and the new policy of conciliation for which Morley had striven in season and out of season, than he fell, with Burke the Under-Secretary, brutally murdered in Phœnix Park. Well has it been said, wrote Morley in later days, that Ireland is the sport of an aimless destiny. This blind crime—for the murderers did not know Cavendish—at once arrested the policy of conciliation which Parnell and Chamberlain had agreed upon with the approval of the Cabinet. Another Coercion Act was unavoidable, and Mr. (now Sir) George Trevelyan gallantly accepted the thankless, odious, and dangerous task of administering it. The new Coercion law was much less objectionable than the naked and arbitrary provisions of the measure with which Forster had been entrusted. The Prevention of Crime Bill, as he styled it, was introduced by Harcourt, then Home Secretary, on May 11, five days after the tragedy in Phœnix Park. While accepting it as an improvement on Forster's Act, Morley did not like the new Bill, and in spite of the unpopularity of criticism at that moment, he ventured to state objections in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Frederic Harrison, who was then writing short articles for the paper, sent him on May 19 a few lines of encouragement:

> I am sure you are right to put down your foot on some of the worst features of the new Bill. It cannot be right, and there will be a fearful reaction, when the English people come to see that they have sacrificed all their best traditions in order to intensify the hatred of Ireland.

Harrison himself was in adversity and deep depression.

Morley replied at once :

I have not liked to press you for more of your ' Thoughts ', knowing that they are not to be summoned by the bare sound of editorial trumpet. But you know without word from me how welcome they are now and always.

I am sorry that all these gloomy strokes have come upon you so swiftly. That you should be depressed and confused by them is no more than natural. But the sun will shine again, and the painful present be transformed into a softened past. Time brings roses—perhaps that's the worst of it.

I find Nature and the green earth the great composer. A quarter of an hour in my garden or on the heath puts the feverish battle of the day into the last century. And it is a losing battle for us at the moment. Never mind. The next campaign will start from new ground that we are now winning.

Two cheerful letters to his sister follow :

BERKELEY LODGE, *May* 27, 1882.—At last Whitsuntide has come—to the no small comfort of harassed politicians. I marched out of my office yesterday forenoon, and I shall not see it again for a week, D.V. You may suppose that I have had a pretty hot time of it for some weeks now, as the *P.M.* has come into a very prominent and important position on Irish matters, and the said matters are by no means smooth sailing, but very much the reverse. I am one of the best abused men in Pall Mall, along with Chamberlain ; but that does no harm. Everybody would be very happy to be on easy terms with one. I have come through the strain quite sound in wind and limb ; have written an article a day for a month, *plus* eleven pages of the *F.R.*, and done all my other work as well, besides carrying on a pretty lively quarrel with the proprietors of the *Fortnightly* into the bargain.

I am going to spend a couple of days in tidying up my papers, letters, and so forth. Then on Tuesday I may possibly go to Devonshire, or Cumberland, or Paris for four or five days.

ATHENÆUM, *June* 8 (after a visit to Ramsgate, where

Book III.

he spent three days out of doors enjoying brilliant sunshine and a superb sea) :

> Never a word did I speak except to the waiter, to bid him attend to my little comforts. And for that matter, they were *not* attended to, in the mighty matter of cookery, the villainy of which surpassed anything in my modest experience. The harbour is really a lively and amusing place : the dirtiness, the smell of tar, the boats going in and out round the sharp corner of the sea-wall, the ice-blocks being incessantly hoisted up, as you remember, into the warehouses. Your friend the Vulcan I did not see : otherwise things were exactly as when we used to be there. . . . I have arranged to stick at my post until the last week in August, and Stead takes his holiday first—from the middle of July, to wit. I am in capital working order, dashing off my article per diem like a man, and doing drudgery of various kinds for the rest of the day. Dining I reduce to a minimum —and I even refused, for self and partner, a banquet at the Mansion House. We all went to the Opera on Friday to hear Lucca in *Carmen*, and very pretty it was. I deplore your absence at such a time as this. It seems to me the very height of unwisdom—but as I say to all the universe among my female friends, ' You know best ', meaning thereby the very opposite.

In 1882, besides editorial notes and the article on Egyptian policy already mentioned, Morley contributed three essays to the *Fortnightly*—a review of Caroline Fox's *Journals*, another of Bain's *Life of James Mill*, and a ' Valedictory ' to his readers, of which a revised version appears in the *Miscellanies*. The first is little more than a pleasing selection of extracts from a book which he much enjoyed. The second, I think, deserves a permanent place among the half philosophic, half biographic essays in which Morley excelled. He found, as others have done, that Bain's book was less interesting than its subject. James Mill's reputation, he thought, was below his deserts, partly because his fame was eclipsed by Bentham, partly because his mind

was cast in the mould of the eighteenth century—" he was the last of its strong and brave men ". Besides, the cruel, intolerant, repressive, and unjust laws against which he crusaded were rapidly repealed; and after his death an emancipated England called for another kind of spirit among reformers. This spirit was found in the more genial personality of the son, whom Bain happily described as James Mill's ' best work ' : " By the time J. S. Mill came to think for himself, the fabric of abusive and tyrannical misgovernment had fallen to the ground, and it had become necessary to restore conservative and historic sentiment to its place in social life." Yet recalling all that he did and endured, the fine work which he accomplished in a life of extreme hardship, and his heroic struggles for reform, " I do not know how James Mill could have done better with himself at that time than work from four in the morning until twelve at night, even if gout were the price to be paid for it, and even if his years were somewhat shortened in consequence ". Some limitations of the eighteenth-century mind crop up in Mill's *History of India* :

> He views Hindoo religion, manners, and institutions from an absolute instead of a relative and historic standpoint. . . . He speaks of the Hindoos, their superstition and their degradation, with the bitterness of the most ferocious evangelical missionary.

Modern radicalism was deeply indebted to James Mill and had still something to learn from him :

> Mill and his school had two characteristics which have not always marked energetic types of Liberalism, and perhaps do not mark them in our own day. The advanced Liberals of his time were systematic, and they were constructive.

Thinking perhaps of Bright's gospel and of Chamberlain, the nimble programme-maker, Morley feels the want of " a body of systematic thought in our own day " like that which distinguished the school of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. Herbert Spencer indeed was

systematic enough; but his individualism was out of sympathy with contemporary tendencies and, we may add, too heavily laden with pedantical jargon to supply the need. For the Manchester School, whose practical policies had been anticipated by Bentham and Mill, he would not claim a higher place in political philosophy "than belongs to a number of empirical maxims, subject to the limitations common to all such maxims".

A fine passage on James Mill's "brave and calm" death gives us a glimpse of Morley's own stoicism, or rather of a mood half stoical, half of wonderment over the mysterious secret of mortal life:

> This was well and fitting, and it is right that a man should wrap himself in his cloak and turn his face to the wall and die in peace. Yet in reading this there comes back the fact that Mill thought human life a poor thing at best, after the freshness of youth and unsatisfied curiosity had gone by. Calvinism, like the theology which haunted and inspired the sombre imagination of Pascal, leaves in every superior mind that has once imbibed it the seeds of a terrific yet fortifying irony. Perhaps, even, at the last, he had glimpses of the mood imputed in the sayings of divers strong men on their death-beds from the Emperor Augustus to Rabelais: "*Draw the curtain, the play is over.*" We shall never know how much brave and honest work has been done for the world by men in whose minds lurked all the while this thought of the puppet show, the tragi-comedy of phantoms.

A month or two later the death of Pusey is touched on in a note which again reminds us of the change in temper that was coming over Morley towards men who believed in supernatural religion:

> The frank and sympathetic recognition of the services of the first of the Puseyites, even in the camp of those most radically opposed to all which the great Anglican held dear, afforded a pleasant contrast to the ferocity as of the tomahawk and scalping knife with which the death of such a man would have been hailed in other lands. England has seldom

been so free from the bitterness of religious controversy as at present.

At the end of the session Morley took a short holiday. In returning a packet of Cobden's letters to Mr. Gladstone on August 10 he congratulated the Premier on the success with which his Government had emerged from the enormous difficulties with which it had been beset. It was, he said, in a far better position than its best friends could have hoped :

I have been, as you may believe, incessantly absorbed in the work of my little newspaper for the last eight months. To-day I give up the helm for four or five weeks and leave Mr. Stead to try his hand as pilot.

Morley's valedictory article on retiring from the *Fortnightly* editorship in October 1882 is not only in his happiest vein, but is of uncommon interest for the side-lights it throws on the progress of his mind and his change of perspective. He characterises some friends and co-adjutors who have passed away—George Henry Lewes, " a vivacious intelligence " ; J. E. Cairnes, whose genuinely scientific intellect and genial disposition had made him so helpful to the Millites when they were discussing the perplexities of the time at Blackheath ; Walter Bagehot, famed for Socratic objections and delicate ironies, very dear to his friends, who knew what serious judgment lay under his playful and racy humour. Then there was Professor Clifford, whose audacious speculations in science, religion, and ethics, the editor fears, gave for a season " much offence six or seven years ago " because " he proclaimed at the pitch of his voice on the housetops religious opinions that had hitherto been kept among the family secrets of the *domus Socratica* ". Clifford's premature death is attributed to the pressure of exciting work imposed upon himself. " How intense that pressure was the reader may measure by the fact that a paper of his on the ' Unseen Universe ', which filled eighteen pages of the *Review*, was composed at a single

sitting which lasted from a quarter to ten in the evening till nine o'clock the following morning."

In another passage we have an indication that the editor has already lost his earlier zeal for the diffusion of agnosticism. Religious bigotry and intolerance had had their day. "We have passed through a perfect cyclone of religious polemics. . . . Everybody, male or female, who reads anything serious at all, now reads a dozen essays a year to show with infinite varieties of approach and demonstration that we can never know whether there be a Supreme Being or not, whether the soul survives the body, or whether mind is more and other than a mere function of matter." Here he refers to Huxley's memorable paper "On the Physical Basis of Life", published in the *Fortnightly* for February 1869. "No article that has appeared in any periodical for a generation back excited so profound a sensation." The excitement and the stir showed that the results desired had been achieved. The clergy no longer had the pulpit to themselves; for the new Reviews offered more powerful pulpits in which heretics were at least as welcome as orthodox. "Speculation has become entirely democratised. This is a tremendous change to have come about in little more than a dozen years." But the thinker and editor, who had bent himself to this task of rationalising his age with so much zeal and such dogged determination, was not altogether pleased. He feared that what looked like complete tolerance might be only indolence or complete indifference, and that "much of all this elegant dabbling in infidelity has been a caprice of fashion". Perhaps what they had been watching, and what, we must add, he himself had been editing and stimulating, was after all "a tournament, not a battle". At any rate the agnostic had lost his vogue, and now the spirit-rapper and table-turner were coming into fashion. The *Review* had been labelled 'Comtist', but that designation was far too narrow. It would have been nearer the truth to call it the organ of the Positivists;

but even that would not cover many of its political articles. The memorable programme of Free Labour, Free Land, Free Schools, Free Church had nothing at all Positivist about it. Nor could that programme, and many besides from the same pen and others, be compressed under the nickname of 'Academic Liberalism'. Certainly there was no flavour of the Academy about Mr. Joseph Chamberlain with his doctrine of Ransom, or his Three Acres and a Cow. Yet the editor admits that perhaps those were right who fancied they discerned a common drift and scented a subtle connection between speculations on the physical basis of life or the unseen universe and articles on Trade Unions or National Education; for undoubtedly a certain dissent from received theologies had been found in suspiciously close company with new social and political ideas. And it was the Radical Programme, rather than the Unorthodox Theology, which had excited wrath:

> Men will listen to your views about the Unknowable with a composure that instantly disappears if your arguments come too near to the Rates and the Taxes. It is amusing, as we read the newspapers to-day [1882], to think that Mr. Harrison's powerful defence of Trade Unions fifteen years ago caused the *Review* to be regarded as "an incendiary publication".

But in spite of this flavour of a common philosophy, which associated the new science with the new Liberalism, the retiring editor did not claim that the *Fortnightly* under his conduct had been the organ of a systematic and consistent policy. There is not, in fact, he added with an obvious tinge of regret, "a body of systematic political thought at work in our own day":

> The original scheme of the *Review*, even if there had been no other obstacle, prevented it from being the organ of a systematic and constructive policy. . . . The Liberals of the Benthamite school surveyed society and institutions as a whole; they connected their advocacy of political and legal

changes with carefully formed theories of human nature; they considered the great art of Government in connection with the character of man, his proper education, his potential capacities. Yet, as we then said, it cannot be pretended that we are less in need of systematic politics than our fathers were sixty years since, or that general principles are now more generally settled even among members of the same party than they were then. The perplexities of to-day are as embarrassing as any in our history, and they may prove even more dangerous. The renovation of Parliamentary Government; the transformation of the conditions of the ownership and occupation of land, the relations between the Government at home and our adventures abroad in contact with inferior races; the limitations on free contract and the rights of majorities to restrict the private acts of minorities; these are only some of the questions that time and circumstances are pressing upon us. These are in the political and legislative sphere alone. In education, in economics, the problems are as many. Yet ideas are hardly ripe for realisation. We shall need to see great schools before we can make sure of powerful parties.

At the end of his life he often returned to this reflection, thinking that Liberals should form a School, in order to revive faith and hope in their party.

This *Fortnightly* period is the most interesting chapter in Morley's life; for in it his character was formed and his philosophy of life and government developed. In the Valedictory[1] he speaks of his editorship as "a task which was confided to me no less than fifteen years ago—'grande mortalis aevi spatium', a long span of one's mortal days". Fifteen years were enough to bring a man from youth to middle age, to test the working value of conviction, to measure the advance of principles and beliefs. To have conducted the *Review* so long was hardly possible without the commission of some mistakes

[1] The Valedictory in its original form ended with a claim that in his hands the *Fortnightly* had done something to give freedom and variety to thought, and with a friendly hope that his successor, T. H. S. Escott, will do even more in that direction.

—" articles admitted which might as well have been left out, opinions expressed which have a crudish look in the mellow light of years, phrases dropped in the heat or hurry of the moment which one would fain obliterate ".

Spring with its crude but refreshing tints, summer with its glorious effulgence and rich foliage, and the mellow sobriety of autumn, have their counterpart in the man of genius who has risen by degrees to high place in the State and won his way to credit and renown.

Journalism, literature, philosophy, the platform, debate, administration, all claimed him, and in all he made his mark. But in climbing the ladder he did not lose sight of the sky. From the day when he assumed the editorship of the *Fortnightly*, down to the very last efforts of enfeebled voice and trembling pen, a golden thread of consistent idealism runs unbroken, on a foundation of unshaken faith in democracy, liberty, and human progress.

BOOK IV

MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

"Whether Plain or Peer I always remember that it was you who started me on the journey; that the seven Newcastle fights, with your clarion blast in my ears, are the real glory of my public days."—MORLEY to Spence Watson, *April* 20, 1908.

CHAPTER I

NEWCASTLE—ITS POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

As Bristol glories in Burke, Leeds in Macaulay, Westminster in Fox and Mill, so may Newcastle recall with a glow of pride its parliamentary association with Morley. When I first knew him, four years after he lost the seat, Newcastle was a favourite theme of his table-talk. His voice was still husky from the strain of Town Moor and Town Hall meetings at seven contested elections. He could still catch fire from those past scenes of popular enthusiasm, recall the elation of six hard-won victories, and own the pang of a defeat which had closed thirteen arduous years of political partnership with the sturdy Northumbrian Radicals. The cheering crowds, the band of devoted disciples, the high arguments and hot contentions, the busy streets and wharves and shipbuilding yards, had left picturesque and glowing memories. His friendship for the people and his affection for the place endured. From his own political store he had given richly; but the constituency in its turn had responded with generous support. It had rejoiced in his successes and sympathised in his disappointments. Encouragement from partisans, so keen and so independent, had braced him to greater exertions and more adventurous efforts than his friends would have thought possible. Newcastle had no small share in transforming the man of letters, the student, and the political philosopher into the orator, the party politician, and the statesman.

Newcastle is no new town. Its recorded history goes

back to the Emperor Hadrian, who established here a fortified camp (*castra*) to guard the bridge (*pons*) which he threw across the Tyne. The fort was called Pons Aelii in honour of the Gens Aelia, to which family the famous Emperor belonged. Pons Aelia then was the first name of Newcastle; and the successful establishment of this military station led to the building of the Roman wall, that wonderful rampart which, joining Newcastle to Carlisle, long protected the peaceful industries of Romanised Britain from the savage inroads of the barbarous Picts. In Saxon times the crumbling Roman forts still afforded protection against the Danes and other marauders.[1] The bridge disappeared, and a monastic settlement on the *castra* gave the place its second name of Monkchester. After the Conquest a new castle, so called to distinguish it from the old Roman works, was built by the Normans; and from that time for many centuries Newcastle figures along with Carlisle as one of the two English strongholds against Scottish invasions. "The strength and magnificence of the walling of this town", wrote Leland soon after Flodden, "far passeth all the walls of the cities of England and most of the towns of Europe." Its military importance received political recognition; for it was granted the privilege of returning two burgesses to Parliament in 1295—a privilege which it retained by right of population under the Reform Bill of 1832. It was still a two-member constituency in 1895, just six centuries after its first incorporation as a parliamentary borough, when in a fit of reaction it rejected the most distinguished of all its representatives.

In the Civil Wars between King and Parliament, Newcastle, dominated by its famous Duke, was stoutly defended for King Charles; but in 1715, and again in 1745, abandoning the Jacobite cause, it upheld our Hanoverian dynasty against the Old and the Young

[1] One of these castella at the Pandon Gate was only demolished in 1796.

Pretender. By that time it was already the metropolis of King Coal, and a prodigious expansion was to follow the discovery of steam power. Newcastle's personal contribution to the marvellous inventions which inaugurated the new era was George Stephenson, born in a neighbouring village, who constructed his first locomotive at Killingworth Colliery in 1814. A rapid growth of wealth and commerce in the early years of the nineteenth century imported new ideas and new men into the politics of Durham and Northumberland, where a few great Whig and Tory families had long contended for predominance. The Peterloo Massacre, which prompted Shelley to write his 'Masque of Anarchy', had roused the pitmen and craftsmen of Newcastle. It was in those days that the first Joe Cowen marched at the head of his fellow-blacksmiths to one of the famous Radical and Revolutionary gatherings on the Town Moor.[1]

The Whig nobles, to their credit be it said, preferred Reform to Revolution; and the county of Northumberland had the honour of providing the Prime Minister who carried the Reform Bill of 1832.[2] From that time onwards to the Reform Bills of 1867 and 1884 Newcastle and the adjoining constituencies maintained a reputation for radicalism tinged with republicanism, and not seldom conjoined with highly unorthodox views of religion. For the intensity of this Radicalism, and for its propagation in Northumberland and Durham, Joe Cowen the younger, one of the most remarkable and perplexing political characters of this period, was especially and peculiarly responsible. As he was also directly or indirectly the cause of Morley's coming to Newcastle, of the democratic support which carried him victoriously through a series of contests, and of the insidious influences which at last ejected him, we must digress a little to introduce the villain of the piece.

Born in 1831, during the Reform Bill agitation, when

[1] *Life of Joseph Cowen*, by W. Duncan, p. 72.

[2] Charles, Earl Grey, was born at Fallodon in 1764.

Newcastle Radicals were threatening Queen Adelaide with the fate of Marie Antoinette, Joseph Cowen the younger imbibed the creed of his father, now grown from a blacksmith into a prosperous business man. After a good schooling the boy was sent to Edinburgh University, where he gained transient notoriety in the Debating Society by an audacious attack on Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary, for opening Mazzini's letters and disclosing their contents to the Austrian ambassador. This episode may have abbreviated his University career, but it did him no harm at home; for on his return he was at once admitted by his father, who owned a colliery and a flourishing brick factory, to partnership in the concern. In business the young man proved as active and successful as his father, and was soon able to give generous support to political prisoners and outlaws—to English Chartists and Irish agitators, to heroes like Kossuth and Garibaldi, to desperate exiles from Russian Poland, and even to criminal conspirators like Orsini, who was actually brought to lecture on Tyneside. Mysterious visitors frequented his house, and his steps, like theirs, were dogged by the spies of threatened autocrats. In 1854 Garibaldi came to Newcastle. Young Cowen, heading a deputation to the General, presented him with a sword, and expressed in flowery periods an ardent sympathy with " the heroic struggles of insurgent peoples against the absolutist and reactionary potentates of Europe ". Englishmen, he said, " the heirs of Milton and Cromwell ", hoped for the day when Italy would drive out the Austrians and build up again a Republican Capitol upon the Seven Hills.

In those years Cowen ran many risks. There was in his character something theatrical and mysterious. He loved secrecy and advertisement. Dark designs and conspiracies appealed to him. His operations were mostly under the surface. His appearances above ground were carefully planned and premeditated in order to attract the maximum of attention. Once at least a

warrant was out against him for aiding foreign rebels. He was in the habit of forwarding proscribed documents and revolutionary literature concealed in the fire-bricks and other merchandise which the firm of Joseph Cowen and Co. despatched from time to time to continental ports. His power and popularity with the working classes, and especially with the miners, grew apace. He spoke and lectured in all parts of Northumberland and Durham, a Radical of the Radicals.

An eloquent champion of liberty abroad, he preached with equal fervour democracy at home — manhood suffrage and the ballot, popular education, temperance, social and municipal enterprise. He was a patron of rowing and other sports. For some years he was active on the Town Council and in measures for the improvement of the Port. In foreign affairs his zeal for freedom extended to the Abolitionist movement in the United States, where he became a steadfast friend of William Lloyd Garrison, subscribed to the *Liberator*, and backed the cause of the North from the moment the first shot was fired in the Civil War.

By that time he was wielding a new influence on public opinion. The *Newcastle Chronicle* was founded in 1857. Next year Cowen acquired it and remained for the rest of his life sole proprietor. In his hands it soon rose to be the leading newspaper and chief advertising medium of Northumbria, a political rival of the *Leeds Mercury* in North Yorkshire, and of the *Scotsman* on the Border. Whether a nature habitually secretive and rather disingenuous escaped unscathed from the temptations of anonymous power may be doubted. He was too fond of fighting behind a mask. And some whom he pretended to regard as friends in public life found reason to regret that he owned the *Chronicle*, though when confronted with an injurious paragraph he would always disclaim responsibility.

Before the end of the 'sixties Cowen was the undisputed leader of Radicalism in Northumberland and

Durham. He had won a reputation not only for crafty advocacy of extreme views but for rugged independence, public spirit, and a generous local patriotism. A political schemer with rare business ability and an ample fortune, a fine orator and a practised writer, he might well cultivate high ambitions and dream of a great position in the State. The late Mr. Aaron Watson, who was closely associated with him at the time, assured me that Cowen's political influence in his own country during the early 'seventies exceeded that which Chamberlain was beginning to wield in the Birmingham district. In doctrine he was certainly well abreast of the new Birmingham School and of the *Fortnightly Review*. He took the chair for Sir Charles Dilke in 1871, when Dilke gained the sobriquet of " Citizen Dilke " by a republican address spiced with a sharp attack on the Queen's Civil List. Queen Victoria, it is said, so resented the sympathy then accorded by Novocastrians to Republican principles that for some years afterwards the blinds of her railway carriage were drawn down whenever she passed Newcastle on her way to or from Scotland.

Despite his son's republican activities, Joe Cowen the elder was knighted in the year following for his services as Chairman of the River Tyne Commissioners ; but he only lived till December 1873. As he was one of the two members for Newcastle, his death caused a vacancy which had to be filled by a bye-election. A group of advanced Liberals immediately met and resolved unanimously that Joseph Cowen, the son, should be requested to stand. The Resolution was seconded by a young Quaker solicitor, Robert Spence Watson, whose politics were only a shade less radical than the candidate's. Besides supporting his candidature, Watson acted as Cowen's legal adviser on this occasion.

At his first contest, Cowen, twitted with having been elected President of a Republican Club in Newcastle, admitted his faith in Republicanism as an abstract principle, but found the same way out of his difficulty

as the Birmingham Radicals. It was not, he said, a political question at all, and was not likely to come up " in this generation or the next ". He spoke out with fervour against Irish Coercion, and favoured the release of all political prisoners in Ireland. Asked about Home Rule, he did not commit himself to a specific scheme, but justified Isaac Butt's movement on the broad principle of self-government and the right of majorities to rule. At that time few English Liberals, even of those who professed zeal for Home Rule in Poland and Hungary, were willing to concede it to Ireland. Cowen's views on Ireland suggested to the disciplinarians of party loyalty, who abound in every political organisation, that the candidate's orthodoxy was not above suspicion and that he might even some day be found voting in the wrong lobby. But when pressed on this point he refused to budge, declaring that he would never wear the " party plush "—which was interpreted to mean that he would not seek or accept office. The character so strangely unlike his own which he sought to personate was that of Goldsmith's village preacher :

> Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
> By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour.

This at any rate was one of the favourite quotations which adorned his platform rhetoric.

In Hamond the Conservatives found a strong local candidate ; but Cowen carried the day by a thousand votes. Mr. Gladstone's Government had become very unpopular, and this Radical victory caused quite a sensation after a series of Liberal defeats at bye-elections. Partly, it was said, in consequence of this encouragement, but mainly no doubt because he thought he had found in his plan for repealing the income tax a popular election cry, Mr. Gladstone dissolved Parliament almost immediately after the bye-election, and Cowen had to stand again. The other sitting member, Thomas E. Headlam, was Judge-Advocate-General, and had been

member for Newcastle since 1852. The Headlam Whigs were invited at the outset to fight the election in alliance with the Cowenite Radicals. They refused, and when they repented later on, Cowen rejected their advances. The result of the poll, February 3, 1874, was startling: Cowen (Radical), 8464; Hamond (Conservative), 6479; Headlam (Whig), 5807. Headlam's defeat was attributed by his late colleagues to Cowen's machinations, and the new member on his arrival in Westminster found himself cold-shouldered by Gladstone and Bright; though, oddly enough, Lord Hartington, the Whig leader, made friends with the newcomer, and received in turn from the *Newcastle Chronicle* very different treatment from that which not long afterwards was meted out to Gladstone.

Apart from the squabble about Headlam, this coolness of official Liberals towards the newcomer proceeded, no doubt, from a feeling that he might prove even more dangerous if the party took him to its bosom than if he were left on the extreme wing. A friend of Anarchists and Fenians, a republican to boot, however brilliant and however influential in his own district, might be a very uncomfortable fellow-passenger on the voyage back to office. That Cowen, accustomed to play Hamlet on his own stage, would not be content with an obscure part at Westminster was suspected from the care with which he chose his occasions, elaborated his speeches, and ensured that they should be well reported. Nor is it likely that he meant to be a mere free lance; for he had told his constituents that Gladstone and Bright would be his trusted leaders at Westminster. When he found that he was not acceptable to Front Bench Olympians, vanity, jealousy, disappointment, and other like emotions (to which most politicians are susceptible) may have come into play. He began to flaunt his dislike of officialdom and of the Caucus. Independence from a pose became a craze, until at last he gave point and pith to the *mot*, 'An independent member is a member who cannot be depended on'. Before long he seemed to be seeking

opportunities for differing from his party, setting up as one who never deviated from his principles, who scorned opportunism, and despised compromise. Mr. Aaron Watson—who, like another well-known Liberal journalist, James Annand, was on the staff of the *Chronicle* at this time and had a genuine admiration for his chief—used to declare that Cowen was treated inconsiderately by the Liberal Whips. His authority at that time in Northumberland and Durham is described as ' absolute '. Without the Cowen influence and support Liberal candidates in those counties could hardly hope for success.[1] With that influence behind him they had been wonderfully triumphant; for at the 1874 elections, when Disraeli led the Conservative Party to the first real victory it had gained since the repeal of the Corn Laws, " the Durham Thirteen " were Liberal to a man, and Liberals were also returned for nearly all the Northumberland seats. These achievements of Joseph Cowen may be contrasted with Joseph Chamberlain's decisive defeat at Sheffield, and with the losses suffered by the Liberal Party in other constituencies.

So far we have described the successful half of a career which, after raising great expectations, was to end in chagrin and disappointment. No political character of the period is more difficult to estimate. Some find a parallel in Roebuck. Others point to Chamberlain. But Chamberlain, by transforming himself from a Radical to an Imperialist, and from a Free Trader to a Tariff Reformer, became as popular a leader in the party he joined as he had been with the party he left, whereas Cowen found no new army to lead after separating from his old friends and followers. Perhaps he had lost his ambition. Perhaps he had too much pride to recant his old opinions by calling himself a Unionist. The eclipse of Lord Rosebery is perhaps a little more to the point, and it is at least noteworthy that the radicalism of all these four

[1] I except, of course, Thomas Burt, the miners' secretary, whom neither Cowen nor any one else could have dislodged from Morpeth.

men was obscured and almost obliterated when they came to embrace Imperialism. But Cowen's inconsistencies were not those of a place-hunter, and some of his sins against party—notably his speeches against coercion—must stand to his credit. His very last utterance in the House of Commons, when he had been disowned by the Liberal electors of Newcastle, was in support of Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill; and after his retirement from Parliament he could be distinguished from the Tories by his continued advocacy of temperance.

His first hit in Parliament was an attack (March 1876) on the Royal Titles Bill, which was to confer upon the Queen a title very discordant to Radical ears, that of Empress of India. Cowen's speech—delivered with a Northumbrian burr which astonished the House of Commons—was as emphatic as John Morley or Frederic Harrison could have wished. Under a constitutional and limited monarchy, he said, they enjoyed well-ordered liberty, "but if there was any attempt to establish a socialistic empire, to drag into our constitution the forms and principles of Imperialism, hon. gentlemen opposite would soon find that the superstition of royalty had no real hold on the people of this land". The speech delighted Radicals of the left; but its author also received a complimentary letter from the Prime Minister, which may have contributed to the evolution of Cowen's foreign policy. At any rate it was on the Eastern Question that dissension arose between Cowen and the Newcastle Liberals, who, following the example of Birmingham, had (much to his disgust) adopted a democratic organisation with Spence Watson for its presiding genius.

At first, indeed, Cowen seemed ready to throw in his lot with Mr. Gladstone and the unofficial Liberals who were raising indignant protests against Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria. At the end of September 1876, with Spence Watson and others, he addressed an open-air meeting near his home at Blaydon-on-Tyne in a most carefully

studied oration. The agitation, he declared, "was honorable to the people". It was a spontaneous and generous expression of national sympathy with the Bulgarians. As we had sympathised with Greeks, Poles, Hungarians, and Italians in their heroic struggles for liberty, so the Servians who had risen in arms were worthy of support. Without endorsing all the criticisms passed on Disraeli, he stoutly opposed the Tory argument advanced by Sir Stafford Northcote that the people do not understand diplomacy, and ought not to control foreign policy. If the masses were ill-informed, that was the fault of the Government and of our system of secret diplomacy. On broad issues of foreign policy the British people were usually right and the governing classes usually wrong. So it had been in the American Civil War, and in the struggle of the Italians against their oppressors. It was true that the Turks were not the only nation guilty of atrocities. There had been massacres in Glencoe and in Jamaica, in India and in Algeria. But this was "a recent and great outrage upon humanity by the emissaries of a Government that is at once our ally and protégé". Something must be done. "To permit the continuation of the Turkish Empire in its present form would be a scandal to civilisation and an outrage upon humanity." He went so far with Mr. Gladstone as to suggest that the Turks should be bundled out of Europe. As a nation the Turks were decrepit, and it was useless to think of supporting them as a barrier against a fresh and vigorous nation like Russia, even supposing, which he did not believe, that the Russians were anxious to go to Constantinople. If Russia was to be resisted, "I have more faith in the free arms of the Christian population that inhabit the Balkan peninsula than in the Turks". But "the fear of Russian aggression is an exploded illusion". Of all the practical proposals that had been made, Mr. Gladstone's was the best—that Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina should be accorded the semi-independent status of Servia and Roumania. As to

future boundaries in the Balkans, he agreed with Spence Watson.

As Cowen was to prove Morley's principal obstacle in Newcastle contests, so Spence Watson was to be his great stand-by. Born at Gateshead in 1837, Robert Spence Watson was six years junior to Cowen and a year senior to Morley and the famous men of '38. A member of the Society of Friends, he abounded in public spirit and in zeal for good causes, to which from his youth upwards he devoted much of his time and energy. With Cowen, Watson had worked in the field of education, and had fervently espoused with him the cause of oppressed nationalities. He was an orator as well as a thinker, and soon became a leader of all Liberal and progressive movements in Newcastle. Morley met Watson for the first time in November 1874, when he was lecturing on Robespierre and Danton at the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Institution.

In the spring of 1877 Cowen's views on the Eastern Question began to change, and his London letters to the *Newcastle Chronicle* became so charged with anti-Russian bias that Spence Watson remonstrated. In the correspondence which followed, Cowen astutely took the line that Gladstone was too bellicose. Russia was a despotic power, better perhaps than Turkey, but not much better; and he did not want her to extend too far. He described the Liberal Party (May 1877) as hopelessly split: "The war section goes with Gladstone, the peace party against him." In this letter (quoted by Mr. Percy Corder in his *Life of Spence Watson*) is a paragraph which specially concerns us:

> Mr. Chamberlain has spoken to me twice or thrice about John Morley as a candidate for Newcastle. I think he would be a very good man. And as I am very desirous not to return to parliament, Morley and a local man would suit very well. Morley might attend a meeting in Newcastle, and the people would see him and hear him. I do not know him myself, but every one who does know him speaks of him in warm terms.

Photo. Elliott & Fry Ltd.

DR. SPENCE WATSON

By this time Spence Watson's influence was extending outside Newcastle. When the National Liberal Federation met at Birmingham in 1877, he was a prominent delegate ; and his authority among the Liberals of Newcastle was only second to Cowen's. In spite of the latter's wavering uncertainty, not to say dissimulation, on the now critical issues of Eastern policy, the parting had not yet come. But early in January 1878 Cowen intimated to Watson that he was weary of party politics and would like to retire :

> The Newcastle Liberals should consider the whole situation and come to some resolution as to the course they will pursue in the event of a Dissolution. As I mentioned to you, Mr. John Morley is quite willing to become a candidate. His address is 4 Chesham Place, Brighton. Of course I have no wish, and certainly no intention, to recommend either Mr. Morley or any other man as a candidate ; but I give his name as that of the only gentleman I know of who has expressed a willingness to stand for Newcastle in the event of an election.

By this time fifteen months had elapsed since Cowen had identified himself with Gladstone's Balkan policy, and he had now resolved to identify himself with Disraeli's. At the beginning of the next month, February 1878, the Government asked for a vote of six millions, because, " notwithstanding the Armistice, the Russians were pushing on to Constantinople ". Thereupon, as an English Radical, Joseph Cowen stood up in Parliament and appealed to the Opposition to support Ministers who had proved themselves " better informed than the critics ". Their policy through these perplexing negotiations had been " taking it as a whole, prudent, temperate, and fair ". Patriotism and good sense required that Englishmen should close their ranks. This speech, loudly cheered by the Conservatives, was sharply criticised by Mr. Gladstone two days later. In asking us to prefer party to country, and to surrender our judgment to Ministers on questions of foreign policy, as if we are

to have no regard for right and wrong, the Member for Newcastle, he declared, had advanced a proposition "most shallow in philosophy and most unwise in politics". Cowen, a few days later, did his best to defend himself; but in so doing he was driven to defend the Government of Turkey against the Government of Russia, and to argue that, after all, the traditional British policy of maintaining the independence of Turkey had much to recommend it. At any rate they should not allow Russia to strangle Turkey, and then succeed to her possessions. The removal of Turkish rule from Roumelia would only substitute a Christian for a Mahometan despotism, and let loose new racial and religious passions between Greeks and Slavs, and between the Orthodox and Latin Churches.

Glaring as this contrast seems between the Cowen of 1876 and the Cowen of 1878, it is partly explicable by a genuine hatred and growing fear of Russia. But the language of his letters and his talk of retirement show that he was ill at ease and conscious of the widening rift between himself and his Radical constituents. Separated from the main stream of Radical opinion, he was now, on the great issue, a supporter of Lord Beaconsfield's Imperialism against the Liberal and liberating policy of Gladstone. In response, however, to his letter proposing retirement, the Newcastle Liberals put themselves in the wrong by declaring their continued confidence. Thereupon Cowen, while repeating his desire to be freed from Parliament, agreed to let the matter rest for the present, and at the General Election of 1880 stood again as an independent Radical. The Liberals, however, were determined to have another candidate who could be counted upon to support the Gladstonian policy; and in November 1879 they tried Morley, as appears from the letter to his sister previously quoted:

> Mr. Swan of Newcastle wrote to ask me on Saturday last whether—as Albert Grey had gone to fight South Northumberland—I would have my name submitted at Newcastle.

Of course it was too late. Newcastle would have suited me better than Westminster because it is more radical, and because the recovery of the second seat from Hamond is thought to be certain.

Morley having declined, the Liberal Association chose Ashton Dilke, brother of Sir Charles, who was elected as Cowen's colleague by a large majority over Hamond.

Cowen's aloofness at this (1880) election marked his estrangement from the Liberal Caucus, and the breach steadily widened. After much discussion, Spence Watson, who was now President of the Association, and nearly all the local leaders came to the conclusion in the course of 1881 that Cowen's hostility to the Government should no longer be tolerated, and they determined to try to find another Liberal candidate who would fight the seat along with Dilke at the next election, whether Cowen retired or not.

In March 1882, therefore, they decided to approach John Morley, and Spence Watson wrote to inform him of their decision and to request him to stand. Morley replied that for private reasons he could not for the moment pledge himself to immediate and unconditional acceptance; but he was ready to meet a deputation, and added: "There is no place in England which I should think it such an honour to represent as Newcastle." The matter was left open until the beginning of December, when Ashton Dilke's illness made a bye-election probable, and it became necessary for the Newcastle Liberals to secure a candidate. On hearing of this from Spence Watson, Morley replied that if Dilke retired he would be willing to stand. But would he come forward in any case as the second Liberal candidate? That would make him Cowen's opponent, and would not, he thought, be a wise move; for it would have the effect of provoking the Senior Member for Newcastle to active hostility, if Dilke's retirement led to a bye-election. In that case, Cowen might be induced to put up a third

candidate " who would carry off Radical votes enough to put me below the Tory ", whereas, " if I did not appear until there was a vacancy, Cowen would have no excuse for opposing me, and he might even not be particularly anxious to oppose ". This preliminary correspondence with Spence Watson shows us that Morley had learnt his lesson in the school of political tactics and strategy. He could not afford to risk another defeat. Now and henceforth he displayed not a little of the serpent's wisdom, even when he put on a crusader's armour and entered the lists to champion an unpopular cause.

For fifteen years he had worked hard and successfully at the congenial task of educating and enlightening public opinion as editor and writer. But the daily strain of a newspaper did not suit him. His ambition was set on a parliamentary career.

He knew Cowen's strong hold on Newcastle, and was not disposed to bind himself to fight Newcastle three or four years hence as a second Liberal, anti-Cowen candidate, supposing the expected vacancy did not occur, " and so lose the chance of something easier and more certain in the meantime ". He fully appreciated Spence Watson's difficulty in holding in the more ardent dogs of his pack; but could they not wait a little longer? Early in January 1883 Dilke's retirement became certain, and Morley at once placed himself in Spence Watson's hands, subject to a definite understanding as to the share of expenses which the candidate should contribute. This was settled, and after a week-end with Chamberlain at Highbury, January 13 and 14, the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* expected to speed to Newcastle. " I think ", he wrote in communicating his decision, " that I should be able to make a stout fight. There must be a very strong feeling in favour of the government to appeal to in a town like Newcastle, and I believe that I know the case for them as well as most people."

CHAPTER II

ELECTED FOR NEWCASTLE

THE fight was delayed for three weeks longer. At last, on February 9, 1883, a meeting of the Liberal Five Hundred was convened in the Northumberland Hall to provide for the vacancy. The candidate selected by their committee had arrived in the afternoon, and was ready to address them. Spence Watson, who took the chair, was supported by Thomas Burt, the much-esteemed Liberal and Labour member for Morpeth, and by a number of local leaders, among whom the names of Angus, Richardson, Swan, Craig, Luckley, and Stephens are conspicuous. The Liberal cause in Newcastle at that time commanded plenty of platform talent. Besides Spence Watson, there were at least half-a-dozen first-rate speakers who could hold a Town Hall audience. Their loyalty to the Party and its leaders had been outraged by their senior member, whose radicalism had become so cross-grained that he was now almost invariably opposed to Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal Government. That very morning the *Chronicle* had come out with a leading article to tell the Newcastle Liberals that they ought not to submit to a caucus-chosen candidate, and suggesting an independent man with local connections, like Sir William Armstrong or Mr. Isaac Lowthian Bell, in preference to Mr. Morley. Spence Watson in a fighting speech alluded to this apple of discord which had been thrown into their ranks, and derided the suggestion that the choice of a Liberal candidate should

be made, not by the Liberal Association and its executive committee, but by three or four individuals sitting in the back parlour of the *Chronicle* office. As their President, he had been instructed some time ago to ask Mr. John Morley to stand at the next contested election in Newcastle. On learning of Mr. Dilke's resignation, he had written again; and Mr. Morley had expressed his willingness to appear before them. He needed no introduction to Liberals. Had he done nothing but write that magnificent *Life of Richard Cobden*, he would have conferred an indelible debt on every man who cared for progress and prosperity. Amid great enthusiasm it was then decided that Mr. Morley should be invited to address the Five Hundred. The prospective candidate was called into the room, and on rising to speak was greeted, as is usual on these occasions, ' with deafening cheers '. After a sympathetic reference to Dilke, whom he had known from college days, he expressed a hope that the fight would be conducted squarely, and then proceeded to unfold his political views :

You would not have asked me to come here had I not proved myself to be on the side of justice, freedom, and progress. Years ago when I was a boy at Oxford I hoped I should live always as a supporter of freedom and civil equality and the social brotherhood of man all over the world. Since then it has fallen to my lot to be constantly—too constantly, I admit—expressing my opinion from day to day and from week to week upon the gravest themes that can occupy the human understanding and upon contemporary events of all degrees of importance. I need not tell you that, looking back over so long a space of time, and over such a multitude of opinions expressed, I find many things which I could have wished to have left unsaid. I find many hasty things, and I find a few uncharitable things. It would have been more than human if it had been otherwise. But I can say, looking back upon it all, I have never written a page or a line which shows anything but unswerving faith and unquenchable hope in the sovereignty of justice, in the virtue of freedom, and in

the progress and improvement of the human lot. You will not, I hope, think it immodest in me to say this much. If I had had the good sense and foresight to be born on the Tyneside, I need not in this egotistical way have testified to my own record, but as it is I have no other means of reminding you that, as I have always been faithful to Liberal principles in the past, I am never likely to betray them or to be untrue to them in the future.

But it was not enough to have principles. To carry them out they needed not only individual vigour of purpose, but also, "and almost in an equal degree, manly, honest, and faithful party union".

It is because I am persuaded of the truth and beneficence of Liberal principles that I say as a man of common sense that the only way to bring into practice and to realise them is to be an adherent of the Liberal Party. When I look upon the past I see how enormous have been the services of that party; when I look at the present, I am full of respect and admiration for the good work that is being done; and I look to the future with confidence in the fulfilment of Liberal promises.

As for the attitude and character of the Senior Member, "Mr. Cowen is, has been, and I hope will be a friend of mine":

I have a genuine admiration for his brilliant gifts. I respect his wide political knowledge and his generous political sympathies. I honour the chivalry with which he has clung to forlorn causes. He and I have been in the same minority before now, and have marched together to Coventry. But a candidate standing upon a Liberal platform in Newcastle must define his position; and I say there is one fundamental difference between the Senior Member and myself. I am a declared supporter of the present Government. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) I believe—and I am not stooping to adulation—that its chief is a man more imbued with popular principles, more penetrated with popular sympathies, more constantly on the lookout to satisfy and to meet and even to discover popular necessities than any Prime Minister we ever

had. I see, moreover, that illustrious man surrounded by a group of only less able and not less convinced Liberals than himself. Well, then, I, who wish to see good work done in a Liberal direction, will do all I can to help them in doing it. I will make allowance for their difficulties ; I will rejoice in their successes ; I will be grateful for what they do, even if they don't do all that I want them to do ; I will not cry for the moon ; I will not say that no bread is better than half a loaf. (Loud cheering.)

What he had said might be held by his critics to justify the accusation that he was a slave of the caucus, and, in the language of the *Chronicle*, was submitting his conscience to be " lacerated by the strokes of the party whip ". But he had never admired impracticable isolation. If to be a political independent only meant finding fault with men more patient and persevering, then he repudiated it as a theory which he would be ashamed to act upon. But before they determined in their good pleasure whether they would or would not adopt him as their candidate, he wished to be quite definite about his own position. In the general interpretation of Liberal principles he was in accord with the great bulk of the Liberal party. He believed the men now in office to be as able, as honest, as courageous, as advanced, as Radical as any set of men we had seen or were likely to see. In 99 cases out of 100 he would find himself taking the same view of a given measure or a given policy as they did. It constantly happens that a Member of Parliament, however diligent and unremitting in attention and attendance, cannot make up his own mind for himself. In such matters he would be guided by those in whom he had a general confidence, that is to say, in Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues. In a second class of cases, where he might have doubts or misgivings, he would still look at circumstances as a whole. He would regard the complete effect of any vote that he gave. He would not, because he differed from his leaders upon any sub-section of a second-rate Bill, vote

for their being turned out of office ; but he would support them not only by not voting but by voting.

There was a third contingency. The case might arise —he was not quite sure that it would not have arisen before this—in which he believed the leaders of the party were on a wrong track, asking for what was vicious in principle, or mistaken as an expedient, and likely to be prolific of future mischief. In that case he would be wanting in duty and conscience if he did not vote against them.

But what would I do ? I will tell you frankly. First of all—though I might feel bound to oppose the measure brought forward by the great leader in whom I have confidence, and supported by friends for whom I have an affectionate regard —I will still remember that they are my friends. I will not criticise as if they were my enemies. I will speak to them as a man has a right to speak to those who have been his friends and who will be his friends again. There is another thing I will do, supposing you do me the honour of returning me as your representative. If you think that upon any given occasion I have shown a perverse or unreasonable self-sufficiency, then upon due and formal representation deliberately made I will undertake to come down here and put my case to you as strongly as I can ; and if after that you are of opinion that I have not wisely used a legitimate freedom, then I will resign my trust into your hands.

Ireland was a case in which a difficulty might have arisen. He was thinking of the first Coercion Act. He was not at all averse to stern and vigorous measures for dealing with disorder either in Ireland or anywhere else. He was, moreover, quite willing to admit, and to act upon the admission, that circumstances requiring special legislation and special maxims of administration might arise in Ireland or anywhere else. But one thing he would not do. He would not assent to the sending of an indefinite number of men on an undefined suspicion, on undemonstrated evidence, to prison for an indefinite time, never to be put on trial, never to hear what they

were accused of, never to be brought face to face with their accusers. His objection to the first Coercion Act arose not merely from these general considerations, but from a conviction in his own mind, from his own reading of Irish and many other histories, that it would not work. What had happened? After trying their Coercion Act for less than a year the Government found, as he had foreseen, that it did not quiet the country or produce the consequences they had expected. Thereupon they did a most courageous thing. At the risk of breaking up their party they turned their backs upon that Act. They dropped the instrument that had broken in their hands, and brought in another looking more in the direction he himself had indicated. This was the Crimes Act. Everybody, even the Irish leaders themselves, agreed that special laws were needed to cope with the frightful disorders, the outrages, the cruel boycottings, and the terrible assassinations. In the Crimes Act, as originally introduced, he disliked the provision abolishing trial by jury. What happened? Before the Bill became an Act the Government added a clause changing the *venue* and providing for special juries. As a result, in no single case had trial by judges without juries been resorted to. One thing more. As an editor and journalist under the hard necessity of expressing an opinion from day to day he might have seemed at moments to cavil with the Government; yet in those great measures the Government themselves, to their own honour, had justified and accepted his cavils.

Then a word to Irishmen—and there was a large Irish vote in Newcastle:

I will say this. If Irishmen listen to their own leaders or read their own newspapers they will admit that I have a little right to speak on Irish matters. Because their leaders and newspapers will tell them there is no man in England who has been more zealous, more unwearied, more unremitting, in pressing the Irish case in its best light on his own countrymen than I have been. If I were an Irish patriot,

while protesting against every Act of harshness and severity, I would take good care not to forget the Land Act or the Arrears Act. Some Irishmen do seem to forget those measures. They fix all their attention on what they object to, and have no voice to praise what they ought to be thankful for. They give the dark side of the Land Act. They contrast the number of cases heard in the courts with the number left to be heard; but they forget to mention the cases settled out of court. The more we look at the figures of the Land Act, the more we see its success. The Irish Executive well knows that every judicial rent fixed by virtue of the Land Act brings one more Irishman over to the side of law and order again.

The Five Hundred had listened with respectful attention but without much enthusiasm to this argument. Liberals at this time were exasperated by the conduct of the Irish Nationalist party under Parnell. The candidate, as he said, was determined to have it out; but we may believe that he was not sorry to pass "to less rough ground". Parliamentary obstruction by the Fourth Party—Randolph Churchill, Balfour, Gorst, and Wolff on the one hand and by the Irish on the other—had forced the Government to resort to the closure, and they were reviled[1] for fettering free discussion in Parliament by the gag:

I have been brought up from my youth in the school of liberty. In the very forefront of its charter stands a declaration of the virtues of free discussion, of man meeting man, of mind coming into contact with mind, of truth being struck out by fair controversy. But I do not see that mind meets mind, or that truth is struck out by fair controversy in unending jargon and chatter. If anybody has watched, as it has been my lot for two or three years to watch closely, the proceedings in the House of Commons, he would have seen that more than one half of the time is devoted, not to a fair controversy of reason, not to the tournament of honest discussion where some go to speak and some to listen, but—as

[1] By Joseph Cowen among others.

Mr. Burt will admit—to mere wordy skirmishes and party dodges born partly of vanity, partly of pure faction and mischief. The literature of England from John Milton to John Mill is great in noble pleas for liberty of discussion and for free speech; but it is a piece of quackery, a piece of charlatanry, a piece of cant, to quote those grave and earnest champions and to adduce from their sublime pages principles in support of Mr. Warton and Mr. Ashmead Bartlett.[1]

From the closure he passed to the Egyptian war, and repudiated the theory that it must end in annexation. Loud was the cheering when he declared that we would come out of Egypt " bag and baggage ", and great the satisfaction when he announced his belief that " before this year was out the Egyptian difficulty would be over ". It has been said that political prophecy is the most gratuitous form of error; but Morley, who was in a sanguine mood, not satisfied with unriddling the Egyptian Sphinx, went on to predict that before the year was out the Irish difficulty also would be, not over indeed, but ' abated '.

On domestic questions he believed there was not much difference of opinion among Liberals. He was for the county franchise, and for what was even more important, a radical redistribution of seats. He would give the community power to protect itself against the abuses of intemperance. Since the famous agitation against slavery, no movement had vibrated with such passionate intensity of moral feeling as the temperance movement. He was in favour, too, of a general reform of the land system to give the cultivators of the soil a life better worth living, to increase their number, and to enable them to become owners. He would also favour measures to prevent the landlord receiving great increases of wealth to which he had contributed nothing. He thought it an iniquity that landlords should be allowed to confiscate the unexhausted improvements of

[1] Two long-winded Tory obstructionists. Ashmead Bartlett was member for Sheffield, C. N. Warton for Bridport.

tenants. Legislation was required to make the dwellings of the poor in our towns more fit for human habitation. Lastly, in foreign policy "my maxim would be that of a great man whom I have done something to make known to the public—I am in favour of not meddling in the affairs of other people":

> I believe that every entanglement abroad is an interruption, and a wicked interruption, of social improvement at home. I believe in leaving the poor, inferior, backward races alone as much as we can to themselves. But if we are by force brought into contact with these poor barbarians and savages on our frontier, then I would imperatively require that our agents and our representatives should practise towards them the same fairness, the same honesty, and the same vigorous good faith which we exact from others towards us.

It has seemed right to give at some length the candidate's deliberate exposition of his political creed at the outset of his parliamentary career; there is little in it that he would have regretted or recanted at its close. In a peroration which aroused tremendous enthusiasm, he submitted himself to questions, and expressed his readiness to return to London if they could find some one better able to represent their opinions. But if it was their wish that he should carry the Liberal flag of the Tyne in the battle always raging at Westminster on the Thames between political light and political darkness, "then I promise you, and I promise myself, that I will serve your cause and our cause with an unswerving fidelity, with all the zeal and all the capacity and all the devotion that can be inspired by the presence and the aid and the backing and the encouragement of a high-spirited constituency, and by a consciousness of the greatness for generations yet unborn of the cause for which I am striving".

The 'fit and proper' resolution was thereupon moved by Mr. George Luckley, seconded by Councillor Richardson, supported by Alderman Angus, Mr. James

Craig, Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P., and Mr. J. C. Laird. The chairman then put the motion adopting Morley as their candidate to the meeting. It was carried unanimously " amid prolonged and ringing cheers, the audience rising to their feet, and waving hats and handkerchiefs ".

Morley's candidature was endorsed by a meeting of the Quayside Liberals and afterwards in the evening at a great mass meeting in the Circus, where the campaign was fairly launched.

There is no need, even if space permitted, to describe the course of the contest. Bruce, the Conservative candidate, could count on his own party, with a large proportion of the Irish ; and it was supposed that two or three hundred Radicals, influenced by Cowen and the *Chronicle*, also voted Tory. But the Liberal candidate's splendid demeanour and fine oratory provoked such unbounded enthusiasm that his opponents had from the beginning no chance of success. Their efforts to invoke religious feeling against him were shattered by a sentence. " Religion ", he said, " has many dialects, many diverse complexions ; but it has one true voice, the voice of human pity, of mercy, of patient justice ; and to that voice your candidate, to the best of his knowledge and belief, has always done all he could to listen."

The poll closed at five o'clock on Saturday afternoon. By seven o'clock a mighty crowd began to collect before the Town Hall. Quickly the square was packed and overflowed into St. Nicholas Street, Mosley Street, and Collingwood Street. One who saw from a window of the Town Hall the vast heaving sea of upturned faces could not but exclaim at the impressiveness and grandeur of the spectacle. It was an orderly and good-humoured crowd. But the excitement was intense. At first those in the Town Hall heard a hum ; but as the evening advanced the hum swelled into a roar, broken by party cries and sharp bursts of cheering. While the secrets of the ballot box were being explored, both parties

professed confidence ; and there was enough uncertainty to raise the suspense to a tremendous pitch when at about a quarter to nine the Under-Sheriff—the Sheriff had fainted—came to the window of the Town Hall to announce the figures. Then a loud roar, tempestuous and prolonged, broke from the vast concourse of Northumbrians. A board was displayed in the limelight showing in plain figures :

Morley . .	9443
Bruce . .	7187

A wild shout of joy from the victors rent the air, and thousands of enthusiasts made for the Liberal Club in Grey Street to greet their new member. He and Burt and Spence Watson were well heard—so intent was the silence—and well seen, thanks to a limelight from the opposite side of the street which had been trained on the balcony. All said and felt that it was a famous victory. The majority, though reduced, was substantial, and the reduction was easily accounted for, as a large part of the Irish Catholic vote had been transferred under Parnellite instructions—for this was the new policy—from the Liberal to the Conservative candidate. The triumph, said Watson, was far more magnificent than he had dared to hope for. Afterwards at a supper in the Union Club he enlarged upon this theme :

> The working men of Newcastle, in spite of all the influence brought to bear upon them by the *Chronicle* from 1877 onwards, have never wavered in their allegiance to Mr. Gladstone, and now they have given the *Chronicle* a plain answer and shown their approval of the action taken by Newcastle Liberalism, which had resolved to be directed by representatives of the party in a free and open manner instead of submitting to dictation from the *Chronicle* Office.

Northern newspaper comments upon the result all show that Morley's accession to the House of Commons was felt to be a political event—a victory, wrote one, for genuine reform " in spite of Mr. Cowen's atrabilious

carpings"; a rebuke, wrote another, to religious bigotry and political perfidy. Morley himself after the declaration of the poll described his return as "a victory over ignorance and prejudice, and against such a political combination as had never perhaps opposed any candidate before". On this one of the newspapers commented:

> It was a three-headed opposition, like the terrible bark of Cerberus. There was first the bitter and relentless opposition of the Tories, which was natural enough; next, the more bitter and still more relentless opposition of the inexplicable Irish voters; and thirdly, the insidious opposition of Mr. Cowen and the Cowenites, most bitter and relentless of all.

The *Times* admitted Mr. Morley's ability and courage, but feared that his "extremely advanced opinions" would encourage Mr. Parnell.

The *Northern Echo* rejoiced that "the arrogant domination" of Cowen was ended. "Candour and character" would now represent Newcastle at Westminster. "Early on Saturday morning", it added, "Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons repudiated personal responsibility for Mr. Morley's views in reference to Mr. Forster's failures as an Irish administrator. When the House assembles this afternoon, Mr. Morley, its youngest and one of its most gifted members, will be there to speak for himself."

CHAPTER III

FIRST YEAR IN PARLIAMENT

"OF all the thousand felicities of youth, what can surpass the elation of a literary apprentice, free from tyrannous ambition and conscious of disinterested public spirit, yet alive to the uses and adaptabilities of life, one day finding a gate open for him in the great parliamentary turnpike road? After seeking a parliamentary seat in Blackburn in 1869 and at Westminster in 1880—both of them forlorn hopes—in the spring of 1883 I was elected member for Newcastle-on-Tyne. Success was mainly due to the influence of Spence Watson, a member of the Society of Friends, active in the field of education, with all the sympathy of the Liberals of his time in the emancipation of certain foreign communities abroad, with a stirring gift of the tongue, and a brave and noble heart." So Morley wrote in *Recollections*. His first letter from the House of Commons was fittingly addressed to Spence Watson. It marks the beginning of a political and personal friendship which was only broken by death. It marks also an association of a quarter of a century, continuous but for one brief interruption, with the most famous of all legislative assemblies. The journalist, the philosopher, the man of letters, the editor, was henceforward to give up to party a good deal more of what was meant for mankind.

HOUSE OF COMMONS LIBRARY,
February 28, 1883.

MY DEAR WATSON (I hope that you will excuse and imitate this dropping of the 'Mr.')—My first letter to any

man from the House of Commons must be to you, to whom I am so largely indebted for being here.

I had a very cordial welcome last night from full benches, and everybody has been most kind, both here and in the newspapers. I have had over 200 letters, which strikes me as a formidable beginning. But it shows how much interest the election has excited.

My colleague [1] met me on the threshold of the House, and has been most friendly and obliging. So you see the quarter from which the wind blows, to begin with.

I assure you that I quite miss the pleasant companionship of you and three or four other N'castle friends. Your kindness and considerateness for me in every respect I shall not soon forget, and I beg you to believe how grateful I am. You need rest more than any of us, for you were in the most responsible position, and the responsibility would have made anybody anxious. Take care of yourself and don't overwork.

With kind regards to Mrs. Watson, believe me,—Yours sincerely, JOHN MORLEY.

After the election the usual trouble about subscriptions began. The new member was quite firm. "I shall not give to churches or chapels, nor to any sporting enterprise, if such there be." Canon Greenwell—known to fly-fishermen as the inventor of 'Greenwell's Glory'—was an enthusiastic supporter, and wanted Morley's election speeches to be republished. Again the member was firm. "There are a few passages in them", he wrote, "which might usefully be kept in people's minds. But as a whole they were too hurriedly prepared to deserve any more permanent form."

A lecture by Spence Watson on South Africa provoked a note from the new member (March 11, 1883):

Certainly new trouble is brewing there, and will brew from time to time for the rest of your life and mine. I am not sure that we can do much for the natives. Gladstone made a remarkable statement last week—that after 45 years'

[1] Joseph Cowen, the Senior Member for Newcastle.

experience, he doubted whether our interference on behalf of the natives in S. Africa had not done them more harm than good. Have you made up your mind whether S. Africa is going ultimately to be Dutch or British in its civilisation? Much will depend on one's answer to that question.

There was indeed a plentiful crop of difficulties in that quarter. The Zulus had expelled Cetewayo, and the colonists of Natal were uneasy. The Cape had had enough of the Bechuanas, and the administration of their country had been resumed by the Imperial Government. This was bringing fresh difficulties with the Boers. They had recovered autonomy after Majuba, but were dissatisfied with their frontiers, and were exchanging hostilities with Bechuana chieftains, who—whenever they got the worst of it—claimed British protection. Gorst took advantage of the occasion to introduce a motion calling for energetic intervention. On this (March 13) Morley made his maiden speech. It was brief but to the point. He found strong reasons against any form of interference or military action. "I wish", he said, "that the present Government, within a month of their coming into office, had come out of the Transvaal bag and baggage."

This was plain speaking. Next day he voted in a minority of 63 with a few Radicals, including Labouchere, Cowen, Illingworth, and Thomasson for an Irish Land Bill which Parnell had brought forward.

On the 16th the Transvaal discussion was continued by Forster, who congratulated Morley but beat the Imperial drum in a warlike speech. The native chiefs, 'our allies', should be protected. Withdrawal meant weakness. Morley called it "a famous debate", and described in a letter how Mr. Gladstone pounced upon Forster for "teaching in the most unequivocal language the doctrine of war". Gladstone's speech was indeed a skilful piece of debating. He contrasted the militant Quaker with "my hon. friend the member for Newcastle, who represented the extreme view of non-intervention".

But Morley had reason to be well satisfied; for the Premier had dwelt on the cost and danger of the forward policy with its perpetual frontier wars, and had denounced the Zulu War in particular "as one of the most monstrous in our history".

At this time the Newcastle Liberals were preparing a banquet in honour of their new member. Hearing from Cowen that he would like to be present to show his desire for peace in the party, and "his wish to be good friends with me", Morley communicated with Spence Watson. It was 'a ticklish business'. Still he thought that the Senior Member should be specially invited. But a few days later something 'very base' was done by Cowen or by his satellites, and Morley reluctantly agreed with Spence Watson that "no reconciliation is possible—I fear even I must at last see that". There seems to have been some plain speaking at the dinner about the *Chronicle* and its conductors, which did not brighten the prospects of a reconciliation between the two members and their supporters. Cowen, however, had replied to the invitation sent him by the Secretary of the Newcastle Liberal Club in a letter which seemed to promise smooth things. It was dated March 28, and ran as follows:

Your polite note only reached me this morning when I was leaving for London. Had my arrangements permitted, I should gladly have joined with any section of the constituency in doing honour to Mr. Morley. He is well worthy of popular confidence. Electors of all classes, creeds, and parties may rest satisfied that he will never tarnish the trust reposed in him. In the long roll of able and honourable men who have sat as members for Newcastle, I know of none more able or more worthy. It is not the business of a sitting Member to meddle with the selection of his colleague. But the selection having been made, I feel myself free to say that I know no man with whom I would be more gladly associated than with Mr. Morley. On all essentials, and on most non-essentials, we are agreed; while personally it would not be easy to find two members between whom there exists such a

cordial trustfulness and friendship. I trust you will have an agreeable and successful banquet. CHAPTER III.

This letter was afterwards circulated by the Newcastle Liberal Association in reply to the *Newcastle Chronicle's* spiteful attacks on the ' able and honourable ' man whose candidature Cowen had been first to suggest.

The new member was soon immersed in parliamentary work, which included " sitting in judgment on a railway bill, with barristers bullying and wrangling before me and two other M.P.s ". Public business was perpetually obstructed by the Parnellites, and a group of Tories.

It was fagging work, so he wrote to his sister from his home one night in April : " I got so dog-tired of my legislative duties at 7 this evening that I bought a pound of salmon and came down here quietly to devour it in peace." To the labours of Parliament were added those of the platform. In mid-May he sped off to Newcastle and thence to Liverpool. After it was over he wrote to his sister, May 24 :

I was terribly driven last week. It would have been the death of most people, and my friends warn me not to repeat the experiment. All went well. The Newcastle people were full of friendship, and the Liverpool people were as kind as they could be. I had a great reception both at the banquet and at the Circus. I don't know if you saw the account of my personal appearance in the *Daily Post*; if you did it would amuse you.

The Banquet here referred to was given in his honour by the Liverpool Reform Club on May 17. Morley took obstruction as his text. The game of the opposition, he said, was perfectly clear. They were endeavouring by delay, by introducing all kinds of minute obstacles, to make the passage of laws so tedious, so harassing, so disgusting as to rob the authors of legislation of half their credit, to rob the legislation of half its lustre, and to rob the legislature of all its dignity and honour.

His address was much admired. The *Liverpool Post*,

then edited by Edward Russell, declared that its lofty and admonitory spirit recalled "the remonstrant eloquence of a Burke". If Conservatives continued to tolerate the tactics of the Fourth Party, new procedure rules of exemplary severity might be necessary. But the true remedy was that indicated by Morley: "to find and touch the consciences of politicians as Englishmen, as citizens, and as believers in the comparative perfectibility of free institutions".

Morley's success as a platform speaker at Newcastle, Liverpool, and other great cities was partly due to the choiceness of his phraseology, but still more to the heavenly gift of exalting party controversy, and raising men high above the smoky fumes of everyday politics. Here was the secret of the moral enthusiasm which he could evoke for good causes; and we need not wonder that provincial Liberals after three years of obstruction, coercion, and Egypt, rejoiced in a newcomer who recalled their principles and revived their fainting faith.

In a copy of the *Liverpool Post* after the great Liberal demonstration in Hengler's Circus, we find the description which Morley thought would amuse his sister:

It was nearly half-past nine when Mr. [Samuel] Smith [1] sat down, and Mr. Morley, amid tremendous cheering, rose to address the meeting. The contrast between the two speakers could not have been more striking. The new member for Newcastle is a tall, well-built man, in the prime of life, with a clean shaven face, and a cast of features not altogether unlike Mr. Chamberlain. He has a powerful, yet exquisitely musical voice of great range, its lower tones, in particular, being extremely rich and sympathetic. He has all the easy grace and fluency of a practised speaker, and a perfect command of language enables him to express his bold and striking thoughts. Naturally Mr. Morley turned to the Affirmation Bill.[2] He had no hard word for Unbelief. Religious conviction was a thing outside political affairs, and

[1] At that time a Liberal member for Liverpool.

[2] The fruit of Bradlaugh's refusal to take the oath.

he would no more stop to inquire what another member of the House of Commons believed or disbelieved than he would consent to be questioned in his capacity as Member of Parliament on the subject of his religious opinions. He had voted for the Affirmation Bill because he knew it was right to vote for it, and he would neither explain nor justify his action. This breezy self-confidence and passionate firmness of conviction roused the audience to a pitch of great excitement, and the speaker could hardly proceed for the cheers which almost every word elicited.

On August 6, Morley, now a leader of the Radical group, put a searching question to the Prime Minister in regard to the occupation of Egypt. What steps was the Government taking to fulfill its various pledges and undertakings as to the withdrawal of British troops? Mr. Gladstone's answer, a masterpiece of complexity, did little to enlighten the minds or relieve the anxiety of his supporters. Morley was accused of trying to embarrass the Government. Four days later he wrote to Spence Watson:

> There is a lying spirit abroad as to my action in the House on Monday and last night. It is supposed that I am harassing the Ministry, etc. On the contrary—they like it and wish it. . . . Master J. C. is trying to be very cunning in his paper, but I will smash, pulverise, and destroy him when the time comes.

On September 12 he writes about a big meeting in Newcastle on the 22nd, at which a number of Northern members were to be present. His 'ideal would be to make that north-eastern corner as important as Birmingham itself. Birmingham was really made by three or four men, who never relied on anybody but themselves, and hardly ever asked outsiders'.

Returning home at the end of September, he described his doings in a letter to his sister:

> I got back from my tour on Thursday, having had a pleasant time. Our demonstration was a great success, less

owing to oratory than to weather, which was magnificent. There was a great turn-out, and it would have amused you to see me and Watson at the head of the vast procession with bands and banners—walking from Sutsword Road past the Station, up Grey Street, and so to the Moor ; the streets and windows lined thick with beholders. We caught sight of the bishop looking on at a corner of Market Street. I wonder what he thought of it all.

He had stayed with the Spence Watsons, and " liked the refined yet simple and Quakerish ways of their house extremely, as I always do ". Everybody was very kind and civil, " and I do not think that I have yet lost any of my friends in the constituency—nor any of my enemies either, I daresay. . . . On Tuesday night Chamberlain and I start for Paris, whence we propose to take a little circular tour. . . . I shall only be away ten days." By October 11 the two friends were at Paris on their way home, and again Morley found time for a letter to his sister :

We have had an extremely pleasant outing, for the weather has for the most part been glorious. After a day's rest in Paris, we started for the country, and made our way leisurely to Chartres, Le Mans, Tours, Blois, Orleans, and so back to the Rue du Helder. It was all very interesting. The hotels in French towns leave much to desire, and one had a sensation of comfort in finding one's self once more amid the glitter of the boulevards. We have been to various plays—including a couple of visits to the Français. Last night we dined with Lord Lyons at the British Embassy—stately but dull. The play is more amusing. The whole trip has refreshed me much, tho' you may be sure that we did not entirely lose sight of the politics of our own country. I wish they were at the deuce, all the same, as the moment after I get back I must be busy about Leeds, where I shall have a heavy piece of work on hand on Wednesday and Thursday. It is too far, I suppose, for you to come : I daresay Bright will make a good speech. . . . We've seen nobody except Clemenceau, the politician, to whom we gave a modest *déjeuner*.

How rapidly Morley had sprung to a foremost position in the front rank is proved by his selection to preside over a great Liberal conference at Leeds, to which delegates from Liberal associations all over the country gathered. It committed the Liberal Party to a radical measure of reform—the extension of household suffrage to the counties. At this meeting John Bright made his famous proposal for overcoming the resistance of the House of Lords by limiting their veto, which was long afterwards adopted and carried by Mr. Asquith's administration.

November 5 to Grace Morley :

Leeds is now an old story. I did not send you papers, because I saw that your own journals were doing full justice to us and our affairs. It was a most important piece of business, and so far as my share in it goes, I came off with flying colours. It will all give me much to think about and to do in the next two or three or four years. . . . It was well you did not come in reliance on my protecting companionship. My time was incessantly occupied, and I never had two harder days in all my life.

Early in December he had arranged to address his constituents in Newcastle Town Hall—

and on Jan. 15, or thereabouts, we are to have a great turnout in honour of Chamberlain, who has out of friendship for me very kindly agreed to come. We shall have a big banquet, and a meeting in the Circus. The Tories have been trying to make a little stir in Newcastle ; so we must punish them as heavily as we can for their impudence. If you should have any Northumbrian plans, it might be worth your while to time yourself for these high jinks.

In this letter, speaking of a youth who enjoyed the Navy, he remarked :

I can only say that I would rather have bread and cheese in Blackburn than a stalled ox on an ironclad. In the ship all is deadly monotony ; in the town, you have the whole

daily movement of a population under your eyes, political interests, responsibilities, claims on your individual energy, and all that makes a *man*.

About this time Spence Watson submitted a friend's manuscript on the metaphysics of poetry, thinking that Morley might find a place for it in *Macmillan's Magazine* which he was now editing. After reading it through J. M. replied :

"It is a performance of which no first class college don need be ashamed. *But* "—and a very big ' but '—" to me I confess that it has always seemed that the metaphysics of poetry are not a fruitful field. The only criticism of poetry that strikes me as other than barren is either the historic and literary or else the moral : *i.e.* the value and position of given poetical products either in relation to literature, language, form—or else in relation to conduct and life. What poetry *is* does not much concern us, nor would it advance our business even if we could find it out."

So he cannot offer this article "the shelter of a magazine" ; but he suggests the writer might send something "less transcendental".

At the Leeds Conference Morley was entrusted with the duty of introducing a deputation to the Prime Minister in order to impress upon him the wishes of the party. Mr. Gladstone suggested a rather distant date. Morley's diplomatic but firm answer is dated Putney, October 26 :

I am much obliged to you for your letter of yesterday. As to the date proper for the proposed deputation, of course we should be wholly and entirely at your command. It only occurs to me that an interval of three months or more between the Conference and the Deputation would seem to allow the powder to get a little damp, and the reverberation would be rather preternaturally slow in following the flash.

On the expediency of a deputation or the reverse I fully recognise the force of all that you suggest. But now that the resolution to seek an interview with you has been passed and

made public, it would be a smart blow to our friends and their proceedings if you should find yourself unable to receive them.

Our object would be (if I may use your terms) to impose by informing; that is, by reporting to you the weighty character and diversified composition of the gatherings at Leeds. The impression was that this report would be both conveyed by us and examined by you more effectively in an interview than by writing.

The deputation would be a small one—consisting only of Mr. Kitson, myself, and five representatives from each of the three convening bodies. I would take care that the extent of our trespass on your time should be extremely slight.

I believe Mr. Bright will give you a good account of the temper and doings of the Conference.

Next to Bright, Morley was now the most popular of Liberal orators outside the Government; and even in the Government, only Gladstone, Chamberlain, Harcourt, and perhaps Trevelyan were in more request. In a letter to Spence Watson about this time, he attributed his high place on the list to the *Life of Cobden*. Of a cheap edition recently issued 30,000 copies had been sold. After a meeting at Reading on November 14, where they gave him a tremendous reception, Morley wrote: "Everything shows me more and more clearly that the working Liberals all over the country are *Radical*, and that the Whigs are done." Still it was not all plain sailing. The Whig leaders, Hartington, Forster, Goschen, and others, could not be ignored. They wielded a powerful influence on society, and helped to keep on the Liberal side many aristocrats, country gentlemen, and wealthy business men who, as events showed, might easily, if frightened, transfer the balance of power to Conservatism.

Even in democratic Newcastle there were Liberal capitalists as well as Radical workmen to consider. "What do you want me to say on the 12th?" asked the member of his chief supporter. Things were "rather queer inside the Government", and he felt he would

have to be careful in his choice of topics. Could Mrs. Spence Watson send him some information about the housing of the poor in Newcastle, and other social conditions? The two friends ultimately decided that the franchise should be the main topic of his speeches. When the time came Morley's discourses ranged, or roamed, over a good many subjects. In the reading-room of the Newcastle Working-men's Club, discussing the value of newspapers, he advised his hearers to pay more attention to news than to the leading articles, though he had himself written as many leading articles as anybody, he supposed, in Newcastle. They should study social and political movements all over the world, especially in the United States, and in the Australian Colonies, where Federation was in the air. Their own judgment on the facts would lead them straighter to the truth than the rather conventional cut-and-dried judgment of the journalist:

> How far should the destinies of this little island, moored where she is, be shaped by what goes on in the Antipodes? Let us remember what happened to our kinsfolk who cut themselves off from us 101 years ago. The American colonies have developed a form of civilisation which a century ago would have seemed incredible. Australia may do the same. I have great confidence in your judgment, if only you master the facts. There is no class on the whole surface of the globe so well fitted to form a rational decision on great social and political issues as the working men of England, and the more they are brought into contact with their fellow workers on the continent and in the United States, the more competent will they be to take large, generous, sober, and right-minded views of all the problems submitted to them.

At a nursery institute he discussed housing, declaring that the overcrowded debris of our destitute and neglected classes in the great towns was living a life distinctly more degraded than that of savages in the Pacific islands. There was an Outcast Newcastle as well as an

Outcast London. "I am beginning to doubt", he added, "whether it is possible to grapple with this enormous mass of evil in our society by merely private, voluntary, and philanthropic effort. I believe we shall have to bring to bear the collective forces of the whole community, shortly called the State, in order to remedy things against which our social conscience is at last beginning to revolt."

A musical entertainment attached to the proceedings gave him an excuse for brevity; for, said he, "though I profess to care a little for politics, I believe the only thing I really do care for is music". But, being initiated that night into the Rose of Tyne Lodge of Free Gardeners, the newly-made brother, on accepting the emblem of Free Gardenry, recollected two other passions: "If, perhaps, my first love is a library, I have no doubt that my second love is a garden, and the whole symbolism of this association is to me delightful."

A lively narrative of his labours may be transcribed from a letter to his sister on December 17, after his return:

I sent you a paper from the famous city, giving you an account of one day's doings. . . . The meeting in the Town Hall was a very good one, and everybody seemed to be well satisfied. The next day I started at 11 for Bedlington, near the Morpeth country, where I spent three hours in the bowels of the earth, and very grim and fatiguing it was. The air, as you may suppose, is not very pure, and I was clad in the heating garb of the pitman, and duly armed with safety-lamp and staff. It was very interesting indeed, and I am glad that I have seen the sight, but I don't suppose that I shall go down a pit again. The owners have a cottage close by; so I had a large wash—for I was black as a coal heaver—followed by an excellent dinner, with a glass of champagne, in spite of Andrew Clark. We got back to Newcastle at 6.40, and I went to *three* little meetings and made three little speeches before I got to bed. Not bad, considering that the night before I had spoken for an hour and 25 minutes in that

very difficult place, the Town Hall. I stayed one night at Watson's, and two nights with Stephens. . . . The speech seems to have made its mark. The *Times* gave me a column and three quarters, which for a private member is an unheard of honour. It does not elate me much. I have been invited to Manchester to have a 'swarry' in my honour, and to Plymouth to preside at a Conference; but I declined stubbornly, in spite of much pressure. The enemy say I do all this "to advertise myself". They little know how diligently I avoid it, and how very far a very small amount of publicity goes with me. I have been sitting in my library this evening, looking vacantly at my books in the firelight, as complacently as a cat blinking in the sunshine. That is what I like best after all.

A few days later he talks of their Christmas fare, which included "oysters from Chamberlain and a wild turkey from Carnegie".

Besides the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which he did not leave until the summer, Morley had undertaken to edit *Macmillan's Magazine*. Morley's 'reign' began in May 1883 and lasted till the summer of 1885. *Macmillan's* had been established in 1859 just before the *Cornhill*. Morley had written for it before he went to the *Fortnightly* at the suggestion of Alexander Macmillan, whom he once described as his earliest and greatest benefactor: "He became my friend when friends were few, and nobody was ever more helpful and considerate."[1]

For *Macmillan's*, as for the *Fortnightly*, Morley preferred the signed to the unsigned article, and he secured Huxley and Bryce for his first number, May 1883. Among those to whom he turned for assistance was Mrs. Humphry Ward, in whose *Life* (by her daughter,

[1] In the life of Alexander Macmillan a letter is quoted, August 29, 1866, to Morley: "I enclose a cheque for your article which I like exceedingly. I hope you will go on with the next one about Luxury, and give us a continuation of the same tone." The article referred to was on Social Responsibilities. Morley had also written the paper on George Eliot's novels (cf. Vol. I. p. 55), which gave the author so much pleasure that G. H. Lewes called on Macmillan to thank him.

Mrs. G. M. Trevelyan) several of Morley's letters have lately appeared. One of them, written on December 13, 1882, was in reply to a (rather tardy) remonstrance which she sent him about his attacks on her relative, W. E. Forster. It is a good example of the answer that turns away wrath. After premising that the 'frank and direct vigour' of her letter increased his respect for the writer, Morley went on :

To answer it, as it deserves, is hardly possible for me. It would take a day for me to set forth, with proper reference to chapter and verse, all the reasons why I could not follow Mr. Forster in his Irish administration. They were set forth from time to time with almost tiresome iteration as events moved forward.

In all that you say about Mr. Forster's unselfishness, his industry, his strenuous desire to do what was right and best, nobody agrees more cordially than I do. Personally, I have always had—if it is not impertinent in me to say so—a great liking for him. He was always very kind and obliging to me, and nothing has been more painful to me than to know that I was writing what would wound a family for whom I have such sincere respect as I have for his. But the occasion was grave. I have been thinking about Ireland all my life, and that fashion of governing it is odious and intolerable. If Sir Charles Dilke or Mr. Chamberlain had been Chief Secretary, and carried out the Coercion Act as Mr. Forster carried it out, I could not have attacked either of them, but I should have resigned my editorship rather than have connived by silence or otherwise at such mischief.

I may at times have seemed bitter and personal in my language about Mr. Forster. One falls into this tone too readily, when fighting a battle day after day, and writing without time for calm revision. For that I am sorry, if it has been so, or seemed so. Mr. Forster's friends—some of them—have been extremely unscrupulous in their personalities against me, their charges of intrigue, conspiracy. All that I do not care for one jot : my real regret, and it is a very sincere one, is that I should seem unjust or vindictive to people like you, who think honestly and calmly about

politics, and other things. I hope that it is over, and that I shall never have to say a word about Mr. Forster's Irish policy again.

Mrs. Trevelyan remarks : "Such a letter only served to strengthen friendship. Mrs. Ward wrote many articles for *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1883 and 1884." The new editor also introduced a Review of the Month—which dealt, like his "Chronique" in the *Fortnightly*, with current politics from the standpoint of Philosophic Radicalism. This infusion of a political element may have been justified by the analogy of *Blackwood's Magazine*; but it did not outlive Morley's editorship. Several brilliant contributions to the magazine came from his own pen. In June 1883 there is a bright sketch of his friend and neighbour at Wimbledon, W. R. Greg, brother-in-law of Walter Bagehot, a most attractive and engaging talker :

> When the chances of residence made me his neighbour, an evening in his drawing-room, or half an hour's talk in casual meetings in afternoon walks on Wimbledon Common, was always a particularly agreeable incident. Some men and women have the quality of atmosphere. The egotism of the natural man is surrounded by an elastic medium. Mr. Greg was one of those personalities with an atmosphere, elastic, stimulating, elevating, and yet composing.

On Christmas Eve, 1883, Morley completed an introduction of some fifty pages to an edition of Emerson's works. It is in his best manner and most characteristic vein. Emerson's transcendentalism did not prevent Morley from enjoying the philosopher's serenity, and his habit of ruminating, though his ruminations might lead to very little. Even in Emerson's style, often obscure and sometimes ungrammatical, he finds many virtues.

In February 1884 Morley reviewed Seeley's *Expansion of England*, a book in which he detected danger; and indeed Seeley was one of the founders of a new school of Imperialism doomed to be celebrated by poets like

Kipling and Henley, and by a group of statesmen among whom Lord Rosebery, Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Milner would be prominent. This essay has no arresting phrases like " the unlucky prowess of our ancestors ", which Morley had coined at lively moments in earlier days ; but it presents a forcible criticism of Seeley's history, and a closely argued exposure of the difficulties and objections to Imperial Federation and to a Customs Union for the British Empire. The question as it presented itself to him was " simply whether the good of the members of our great English union all over the world will be best promoted by aiming at an artificial centralisation, or by leaving as much room as possible for the expansion of individual communities along lines and in channels which they spontaneously cut out for themselves ".

An anonymous article which appeared in November 1884, entitled " The Hero as Man of Letters ", and suggested by Froude's writings on Carlyle, was also from Morley's pen. One sentence, marked by his favourite trick of style—the indignant *as if*—might alone betray the authorship : " As if Mill's feeling for his father were not as deep as Carlyle's for his . . . and as if Mill's lament for the wife whom he had idolised were not as passionate as the dreary inarticulate moanings of Carlyle over the wife whom he only idolised in memory after she had been taken away from him."

Another of his biographical studies was a review of Cross's *Life of George Eliot,* written for the February 1885 number of *Macmillan's Magazine.* But this and the more brilliant portrait of his old rector, Mark Pattison, published in April of the same year, have already been noticed. They are to be found, with the essays on Emerson, Greg, and Seeley, in his *Miscellanies.*

CHAPTER IV

THE FRANCHISE AND THE LORDS—1884

THE year 1884, to quote an Annual Summary, was "crowded with events at home and abroad which will fix upon its annals the attention of the future student of history". At home the Parliamentary Session, beginning with Foreign Policy and Egypt, ended in a struggle with the House of Lords over household suffrage for the counties. After narrowly escaping defeat in early March on Egyptian policy, the Government carried the Second Reading of its County Franchise Bill in April by 130, and the Third Reading in June without a division being challenged. But on July 8, by a majority of 59, the House of Lords declined to give the Bill a Second Reading, unless it was accompanied by redistribution of seats. So an Autumn Session became necessary, and Parliament was prorogued until October 23, when, after a popular agitation all over the country, the Second Reading of the new Reform Bill was carried in the Commons by an increased majority of 140. Radicals now saw their opportunity of crippling the House of Lords by fighting a General Election on this issue. But Gladstone preferred compromise to a constitutional crisis, and by his action—so Morley declared—saved the hereditary chamber from extinction. Redistribution was attached to Reform, and both measures were passed into law.

The New Year found Morley preparing for another visit to Newcastle, this time with his close friend and

political confederate, Chamberlain, who, as President of the Board of Trade, had some important shipping legislation in hand, and wanted to conciliate the shipowners of Newcastle. The two were to stay with the Spence Watsons at Bensham Grove, and Morley had arranged for his sister to see the show. On January 7 he sent her his programme—dinner with the Watsons, followed by a meeting at the Circus, next morning a deputation, then a shipowners' lunch, followed by the opening of a Club in the afternoon and a banquet—with the young Lord Durham presiding—at six. By way of preparation "Chamberlain and I dine together to-morrow and refresh ourselves at the play".

The huge meeting in the Circus went off with éclat. Every seat was occupied at 6.30, and when Dr. Spence Watson took the chair there was not an inch of standing room in the great building. The enthusiasm was tremendous. After a half-hearted defence of the Government's Egyptian policy, Chamberlain made a radical pronouncement on Ireland. He attributed the difficulties of Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan in maintaining the law largely to the 'self-styled loyalists' of Ulster "led by men of rank and men of education who know enough to know better". He repudiated the suggestion that, when a more democratic franchise was extended to Great Britain, it should be denied to Ireland, lest the Irish people should vote for separation. "We must give them confidence in representation, we must give them a fair representation." Nor could anything, in Chamberlain's judgment, be more childish than the proposal to postpone the redress of Irish grievances until discontent had disappeared. It was like a physician who should refuse to prescribe for a patient until he had got rid of the disease. In such a case "I think the patient would be quite justified in getting rid of the physician". The existence of the Crimes Act was "the greatest argument for not stopping till we have removed every just cause of discontent".

Morley began with a personal tribute :

It is not very easy to say kind things of a friend to his face without producing something which is a sort of cross between a testimonial for a curacy and an inscription on a tombstone. . . . But I may say that I knew Mr. Chamberlain many years ago—years before he was in parliament and before even his memorable mayoralty in his own town ; and the impression I then formed of his great political capacities —of what is much more important than political capacity, his fidelity to Liberal principles—that impression, so far from having been shaken by what has happened in the eventful years since, has grown and been strengthened, and is now shared by many thousands of his countrymen.

No doubt mud had been thrown with an unsparing hand, "but time will dry the mud, and then Mr. Chamberlain will quickly brush it off. He is teased, as other eminent men have been teased before him by the political mosquito, but I have great faith that the General Election will still the furious creature by a little handful of insect powder." Cowen had called Chamberlain a "bedizened place-man." Morley retorted :

Well, Gentlemen, I am not of those who would have sulked at the Battle of Waterloo because Wellington had a title and wore a cocked hat. So long as a placeman—that is a Minister of the Crown—devotes himself without rest or stint to public services, so long as he scorns delights for the popular cause, so long as he remains, now that he is somebody, true to the professions and faithful to the principles which he avowed when he was nobody—for so long he may bedizen himself as he pleases, and yet retain my confidence, my gratitude, and my regard.

Turning to Egypt, Morley struck a clear and decisive note. He had stated his views to them a few days before, and to-night he would only add :

If there should be in any quarter a revival of that sentiment of greedy anxiety to appropriate what belongs to others, and to extend the cares and anxieties of an Empire already so

vast as to overtax our statesmen almost beyond endurance, then, Gentlemen, I shall be found with those, whether they be few or whether they be many, who would stand by our solemn pledges, who will not listen to the siren voices of territorial aggrandisement, however craftily disguised as benevolence or duty, and will protest to the very last against new ventures which will have the effect of blackening our reputation in Europe, of endangering the peace between great nations, of forcing you to increase your army, of loading you when all is done with a second Ireland in the Mediterranean, and of adding to the taxes, the burdens, the embarrassments and difficulties of a people already over-harassed and over-burdened.

Chamberlain on the following day addressed the shipowners, who liked him much better than his Shipping Bill. Writing soon after his return to London, Morley described the whole affair as a success: "People were certainly very kind to me. Even the cool-headed Chamberlain was struck by it, and referred to it again and again. He and I dined together on Friday and went to the play. He'll be Prime Minister one of these days."

This visit of Chamberlain and Morley to Newcastle is of interest not only because it exhibits their affectionate relations, but also because one of its incidents gave an opening to Lord Randolph Churchill. On Conservative platforms in the early 'eighties, Lord Randolph Churchill was by far the most popular orator; and he was bidding hard against Chamberlain for the favour of the masses. He had the advantage of being able to point to the errors and misfortunes of Mr. Gladstone's government, especially in Egypt. Trade was bad and unemployment rife. Recollections of Protection and the Corn Laws were too recent and vivid at that time to permit old names to be revived. But Lord Randolph talked of 'Fair Trade' and denounced Gladstone, Bright, and Chamberlain with a wit, a raillery, and an audacity which tickled the ears of the Tories and brought down the gallery. At the

same time his adventurous essays in political economy, however misinformed, had the merit of novelty, and appealed to the pugnacious instincts of the man who thinks that foreigners are robbing him of his profits or his wages, and wants to 'hit back'. In his star performance at Blackpool—the Vanity of Vanities speech [1]—he demanded a Commission to inquire why all British trades were dead or dying. It made a stir at the time, and was often referred to by free traders like Chamberlain and Morley as an extravaganza of the Protectionist imagination which had to be met by solid arguments and statistical comparisons. Students of fiscal politics, recalling a well-known passage in one of Chamberlain's Tariff Reform orations, when a similar depression of trade evoked twenty years later a similar lamentation, will recognise its paternity in the following string of flashy inexactitudes :

> What is the state of things in the world of British industry ? We are suffering from a depression of trade extending as far back as 1874, ten years of trade depression, and the most hopeful either among our capitalists or our artisans can discover no signs of a revival. Your iron industry is dead, dead as mutton ; your coal industries, which depend greatly on the iron industries, are languishing. Your silk industry is dead, assassinated by the foreigner. Your wool industry is *in articulo mortis*, gasping, struggling. Your cotton industry is seriously sick. The shipbuilding industry, which held out longest of all, is come to a standstill. Turn your eyes where you will, survey any branch of British industry you like, you will find signs of mortal disease. The self-satisfied Radical philosophers will tell you it is nothing ; they point to the great volume of British trade. Yes, the volume of British trade is still large, but it is a volume which is no longer profitable ; it is working and struggling. So do the muscles and nerves of the body of a man who has been hanged twitch and work violently for a short time after the operation. But death is there all the

[1] January 24, 1884.

same, life has utterly departed, and suddenly comes the *rigor mortis*. Well, but with this state of British industry what do you find going on? You find foreign iron, foreign wool, foreign silk and cotton pouring into the country, flooding you, drowning you, sinking you, swamping you; your labour market is congested; wages have sunk below the level of life; the misery in our large towns is too frightful to contemplate, and emigration or starvation is the remedy which the Radicals offer you with the most undisturbed complacency. But what produced this state of things? Free imports? I am not sure; I should like inquiry; but I suspect free imports of the murder of our industries much in the same way as if I found a man standing over a corpse and plunging his knife into it I should suspect that man of homicide, and I should recommend a coroner's inquest, and a trial by jury.

With these Churchillian paradoxes and other less lively expositions of the Fair Trade case Morley often had to deal at Newcastle. His rejoinders were always sound and sensible; but he seldom really enjoyed, or was at his best in, economic and financial discussion.

Lord Randolph's answer to Chamberlain's attacks on the Tory aristocracy—'the lilies of the field'—took the form of a counter-attack, prompted by the appearance of a millionaire peer at the Newcastle dinner to Chamberlain, which, he said, would clearly prove "what transparent humbug the Radical policy is, and what transcendent impostors the Radical party is composed of":

A study of one single incident in Mr. Chamberlain's interesting career will lead you to this conclusion. Mr. Chamberlain a short time ago attempted to hold Lord Salisbury up to the execration of the people as one who enjoyed great riches, for which he had neither toiled nor spun, and he savagely denounced Lord Salisbury and all his class. As a matter of fact, Lord Salisbury from his earliest days has toiled and spun in the service of the State and for the advancement of his countrymen in learning, in

wealth, and in prosperity; but no Radical ever yet allowed himself to be embarrassed by a question of fact. Just look, however, at what Mr. Chamberlain himself does. He goes to Newcastle and is entertained at a banquet there, and procures for the president of the feast a live earl, no less a person than the Earl of Durham. Now Lord Durham is a young gentleman who has just come of age, who is in the possession of immense hereditary estates, who is well known on Newmarket heath, and prominent among the gilded youth who throng the corridors of the Gaiety Theatre, but who has studied politics about as much as Barnum's new white elephant, and upon whose ingenuous mind even the idea of rendering service to the State has not yet begun to dawn. If by any means it would be legitimate—and I hold that it is illegitimate—to stigmatize any individual as enjoying great riches for which he has neither toiled nor spun, such a case would be the Earl of Durham; and yet it is under the patronage of the Earl of Durham, and basking in the smiles of the Earl of Durham, and bandying vulgar compliments with the Earl of Durham, that this stern patriot, this rigid moralist, this unbending censor, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, flaunts his Radical and levelling doctrines before the astounded democrats of Newcastle.[1]

From this platform warfare between the rival demagogues of Radicalism and Toryism, we turn to the House of Commons, where a Conservative onslaught on Egyptian policy in February 1884 soon brought Morley into prominence; for to him the occupation of Egypt was a crucial question.

As we have seen in previous chapters, his attitude towards Imperialism and Imperial expansion was founded upon a conviction that the British Empire in Asia and Africa was already quite large enough. He saw that the Forward Policy involved costly frontier wars and the risk of disastrous collision with other Powers such as France and Russia. Time after time, from 1876 onwards, he opposed new commitments and entanglements.

[1] Lord R. Churchill at Blackpool, January 24, 1884.

Time after time he favoured and recommended, wherever possible, by conciliatory diplomacy and peaceful withdrawals, the extension of self-government and the diminution of imperial risks and responsibilities. As Augustus advised his successors not to extend the boundaries of the Roman Empire, so Morley conceived that the strength and resources of his own country should be conserved, or productively employed at home, instead of being wasted on external aggrandisement. In his mind a prudent and peaceful foreign policy was essential to the social programme which Chamberlain had been unfolding with his support. For otherwise they would be impoverishing by war the people whose health and happiness and opportunities they were proposing to improve and to increase by legislation. In writing the *Life of Cobden* he found this philosophy of Empire and the logical connection between peace and progress fortified at every point by moral and economic arguments. His concluding chapter showed how Cobden had laid the foundations on which alone a social reformer can build securely: "To abstain from intervention in the affairs of other nations is not only recommended by economic prudence, but is the only condition in which proper attention can be paid to the moral and social necessities at home. . . . He translated the revolutionary watchword of the Fraternity of Peoples into the language of common sense and practice, and the international sentiment, as translated by him, became an instrument for preserving as well as improving European order. He was justified in regarding his principles as the true conservatism of modern societies."

Again, diplomacy, as Cobden and Morley conceived it, is not dexterity in the game of bluff, but the art of soothing jealous susceptibilities, allaying apprehensions, or inventing solutions; and its aim should be, not to trim some imaginary balance of power or to mask some encroachment upon a neighbour's property, but to help the world to move steadily along the grooves of peaceful

progress ' instead of tossing on a viewless sea of violence and passion '.

With such ideals and standards firmly implanted in his mind, we cannot wonder that Morley, honourably ambitious to serve his country, saw with wrathful dismay the plunging and floundering of Ministers in vain attempts to extricate themselves from the mud of the Nile. Their faults indeed were in execution rather than intention. Having decided on the complete evacuation of the Soudan, they despatched General Gordon to Khartoum in January 1884 to effect a withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons. They could hardly have made a worse choice. Lord Cromer summed him up as a bellicose soldier who threw his instructions to the winds. Before long, to the consternation of the Government, news came that Gordon was in league with Zebehr, a notorious slave hunter, and proposed not only to legalise slavery but to instal Zebehr as his successor. When the year 1884 opened, Arab forces were threatening Souakin under Osman Digna, who had routed an Egyptian army. In February and March a British army under General Graham defeated Osman Digna ; but no attempt was made to relieve Khartoum until the end of the session, when the Government took a vote of credit for an expedition by the Nile route in case it should become necessary. In September Lord Wolseley was sent to Cairo, and began to prepare for the expedition. The policy then adopted in consequence of Gordon's failure, or refusal, to carry out his instructions was dubbed by Sir Wilfrid Lawson ' the policy of Rescue and Retire '. In trying to disentangle itself from the results of intervention in Egypt, Mr. Gladstone's Government had got itself and the country into a truly disastrous scrape.

Morley's position was embarrassing. He did his best during the session of 1884 to give effect to his views, and it is difficult to see how he could have done either much more or much less. Unlike Cowen and some other Radicals, who made a hero of Arabi as an Egyptian

Garibaldi, he had acquiesced in the suppression of Arabi's rebellion by British forces as a temporary expedient for rescuing Egypt from anarchy and insolvency. This perhaps was his mistake. He took his cue from Chamberlain, who remained in the Government, rather than from Bright, who resigned on the bombardment of Alexandria. It would be an exaggeration to say that all the thousands of Englishmen, Egyptians, and Arabs who perished and all the treasure squandered in the Soudan were inevitable consequences of the bombardment of Alexandria. But any one who follows the details of the story and the debates in Hansard will easily understand how Mr. Gladstone's Government, intending within a few months after Tel-el-Kebir to withdraw the British army from Egypt, ended by despatching a military expedition to Khartoum. The lesson was not lost on Morley. In future he held to the maxim '*obsta principiis*'.

When all was over, there remained one solid consolation. The costly and tragic blunder of Gordon's appointment was redeemed by the fortunate selection of Sir Evelyn Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, as British Consul-General and diplomatic agent in Egypt. He practically ruled the country for twenty-three years, restored its credit, reduced taxation, and gave the people a prosperity such as they had never before enjoyed. If the economic regeneration of a country followed by the establishment of autonomy can justify warlike intervention, then certainly the bombardment of Alexandria and the battle of Tel-el-Kebir were justified by the record of Lord Cromer's administration.

Mr. Gladstone's Government was saved from actual defeat on Egypt by a division of its critics. While the Conservatives complained that it was not intervening with sufficient force and vigour, the Radicals demanded complete withdrawal, and regretted that it had intervened at all. Thus, when Sir Stafford Northcote, on February 11, moved his vote of censure, Sir Wilfrid Lawson came forward on the 14th with an amendment

against further interference by British forces in Egyptian affairs. Next day Morley stated his views. There were some, he said—referring to Forster—who took humanitarian ground, and insisted that we ought to reconquer the Soudan for Egypt in order to extinguish slavery. But was not the slavery of conscription as bad as the slave traffic? To drag the Egyptian fellaheen from their homes to be massacred in the Soudan was hardly humanitarian:

> I assented to the policy of going into Egypt because I expected that we should come out after the military rebellion of Arabi was suppressed, and therefore I am in a different position from my hon. friend and colleague [J. Cowen], who has said that those who were responsible for intervention are responsible for all that has happened since.

He was suspicious of elaborate attempts to build up a model system of administration in Egypt, and compared some recent proposals of Lord Dufferin to the scheme of an architect "who draws a spacious ground-plan and a glittering elevation, but leaves out the foundation, and forgets to estimate the cost". It is perhaps significant of public opinion that Mr. Arthur Balfour, who followed, denied that any party in the House favoured annexation. Accordingly, he held that Morley's speech, though interesting, was not relevant to the vote of censure. Mr. Gladstone's attitude towards the Radicals below the gangway was so conciliatory that Sir Wilfrid Lawson, after five days' debate, withdrew his amendment. Whereupon the Conservative amendment to the Address was defeated by 49 votes, Cowen voting against the Government and Morley with them.

A few days after this debate (on February 24) Morley wrote to Spence Watson:

> Things are in a nasty state. If Dizzy were alive, I do believe the Government would be beaten within a fortnight. The Egyptian mess gets worse and worse, and I must say that I do not think that the Government have a strong grasp

of a policy. On the morning after my speech Mr. G. telegraphed to me to dine with him that night. He congratulated me thereon (it did *not*, by the way, impress the House very much tho' I held them), and said he was in agreement with most of it. Well then, why doesn't he act accordingly? I said to him, " It looks as if you and I were the last of the Cobdenites ". If he were to leave the Government, the rest of his Cabinet would be straight Jingo. So let us pray for him.

He also gave me to understand that the Franchise Bill would have no disfranchisements (I *presume* the worst kind of faggot will go—but nobody else)—and hoped I should be content, as he was, with 2,000,000 new voters. He said that James [Attorney-General] and he had ' sweated ' over the Bill, but they found difficulties, etc.

Cowen is almost beyond toleration. I did not hear his speech, but I heard that it was strangely rough and violent even in form, as if his malicious rage choked his own utterance.

Morley was much perplexed at this time about Chamberlain's Shipping Bill and the opposition of Liberal shipowners in Newcastle to some of the clauses. Early in March he told Watson that he thought it ought to be dropped. " Franchise Bill and Egypt are quite enough." By March 12 things Egyptian had " taken a grave turn ", and he made no apology for troubling his chairman at Newcastle with an account of the position.

Hartington says that we are going to take possession of the ports on the Red Sea, because they are on the road to India, and are important to British interests.

Gladstone said on Mar. 3 that we were *not* going to remain at Suakin for the establishment of British power.

The two positions are irreconcilable with one another.

After Gladstone's announcement it cannot be contended that *this* at any rate is a necessary result of the original intervention against Arabi. It means a new policy. I enclose you two extracts from articles in the *Times* of yesterday making this only too clear.

To the new policy I am immovably hostile. If it is challenged even by a vote of confidence, I should be bound to vote against the Ministers, at whatever cost. If it is not challenged, I shall be bound on every occasion that is proper and fair to protest against it. If I speak at Newcastle at an election, I shall denounce it. The Tories never did anything so mischievous.

I think it right to tell you this at once—because an election is certainly not remote, and it may be very near.

It was a question whether he should go down to explain his views and line " on this (to me) vital matter ; *temperately, carefully,* but *plainly* ". On the same day he wrote to his sister warning her not to count on much correspondence during the session :

The times are most anxious and harassing in every respect, and for a fortnight past the honour of representing Newcastle has been no sinecure. Chamberlain's Shipping Bill has raised a perfect tornado in that region, and my best friends are as full of wrath as the Tories. Half of the Quayside has been up to worry me ; deputations, dozens of letters every morning, petitions, and I know not what fuss and stir. As the *Newcastle Journal* puts it, I am between devil and deep sea ; the shipowners on one side, and Chamberlain and the government on the other. I have kept steady and cool, and declined to say what I will do until the time comes. Then there is Egypt. The Government are taking a wrong tack, and I don't see how I can go on supporting them. All this sort of thing both takes immense time and fills the mind —to the temporary exclusion of the domestic affections—especially if you add Macmillan MSS. and other odd matters connected with daily bread. . . .

I made a speech in the House on Monday night, which the *Times* called ' acute ', and so it was. But the government is in a very weak position, and if there is a general election soon, it will go hard with many of us—not even excepting me, possibly.

After a little more reflection he decided not to go to Newcastle, where he would only find himself in the midst

of " a Shipping Bill brawl ". As to Egyptian policy, he would press matters as far as possible. " The Government have no real policy and no courage, and are only tossed about by a breeze blown by Jingoes, Jews, and furious philanthropists."

On the Supplementary Army Estimates (March 19) Morley warned the Government that he could not acquiesce in their policy if they took steps involving the annexation of the Soudan, such as the permanent retention of the Red Sea ports. Three days later, Ashmead-Bartlett moved a vote of censure on the Government for abandoning Khartoum and the Eastern Soudan " to slavery and barbarism ". Labouchere followed with an amending resolution drawing attention to the apparently needless loss of British and Arab life caused by military operations in the Eastern Soudan. He was supported by Henry Richard. The debate gives a clear notion of the two schools of Foreign Policy then contending for the mastery, between which the Government was steering an uncertain course. Joseph Cowen intervened to attack the Liberal Caucus and to twit the Radicals with their failure to stop the Egyptian policy at its inception. His own predictions at the time were now being fulfilled. It was too late to withdraw. British supremacy was established as firmly on the Nile as on the Ganges. He placed freedom, justice, national honour and interest before peace. If they meant to leave the Soudan, the recent battles were " unmitigated murder ". He came down very heavily on General Gordon's proclamation legalising slave traffic in the Soudan ; but his speech, as Morley pointed out a little later, was really a plea for annexing both Egypt and the Soudan. Morley, being " resolutely averse to the annexation of a single inch of the Soudan ", regretted that the Government had not clearly stated their position. He intended to vote for Labouchere's resolution, which he did not regard as a vote of want of confidence. He disclaimed any wish to embarrass Ministers, and hoped to hear that they would

act in the Soudan as they had acted in regard to the Transvaal, without fear of public opinion. "In my view," he added, "they are in danger of mistaking a shadow and a phantom for public opinion, and of accepting for real public opinion an odious compound of financial cupidity, bastard Imperialism, and, worst of all, truculent philanthropy."

Hicks Beach then announced that the Conservatives would support Labouchere's amendment. Hartington took it as a vote of No Confidence. The House divided, Ayes, 111; Noes, 94. This was known as the 'Dirty Trick Debate' because Harcourt said, rather too loudly, after the numbers were announced, "This dirty trick has not succeeded".

On May 12 another vote of censure was moved, this time by Sir Michael Hicks Beach, regretting that the course pursued by the Government had not tended to promote the success of General Gordon's mission, and that steps necessary to secure his safety had been delayed. Cowen, on the second day, delivered a carefully prepared philippic against the Government and against all Radicals and Liberals who supported it in the Lobby. Morley rose immediately afterwards to confirm "from my own knowledge of the part from which he hails" one of Cowen's statements—that he is "the representative of no one but himself". Another statement that public opinion was now overwhelmingly against Gladstone reminded him of 1878 and 1879, when Cowen asserted that it was all for Beaconsfield. In this lively mood he poured good-humoured ridicule on Cowen, Forster, and other members of "the Society of Candid Friends", who so seldom lost an opportunity of speaking and voting against the Government.

On May 28 Morley wrote to Spence Watson:

> I think it as well to impart to you a suspicion of mine that a dissolution is perhaps *quite close* at hand. The revival of a financial control, and the limitation of our occupation to two or three years, is making a very bad impression. The

return of Clifford Lloyd in disgrace, and the practical surrender of the internal administration to Nubar and the natives, is a great provocation to Forster. He said to me yesterday: "They are going to put everything in the very worst state possible; to make us keep guard, while the Control screws out the taxes for the bondholders, and while native mudirs sell justice and ply the crowbash."

I believe, then, that as soon as ever the story of the present negotiations is laid before parliament, there will be a vote of censure that will put Ministers either into a minority or very near to it.

I breakfasted with Mr. G. last Thursday. "In the present peculiar condition of affairs," he said, "there may be a dissolution any morning."

I think it worth while to impart this to you, so that you may have your sword sharpened; in other words, so that *Quin may be ready at an hour's notice with all his machinery.*

The *Chronicle* is behaving in the high-minded and chivalrous way that I expected. I perceive that the word has been passed to leave me out of the parliament reports; for I said a few sentences on Monday night, of which no mention is made in the *C.* This sort of thing will put me on my mettle, and then I shall astonish them all.

PUTNEY, *June* 5. (To the same.)—The Herald of Peace is the best piece of reading that I've had for many a day. What a million pities that Gladstone does not take a bold line, and tell the country plainly that it must choose between him and the bondholders.

On June 17 he wrote again to Watson:

I shall be in Newcastle next week, unless detained here by Egypt. Things look brighter. How rapidly the parliamentary situation alters!

The favourable change which had at length come over the political scene was brought about by the Bill for extending the suffrage in the counties, to include another two millions of electors, on much the same terms as in the boroughs. In Lady Courtney's diary there is an account of a week-end which she and her husband,

then Financial Secretary to the Treasury, had spent at Highbury with Mr. Chamberlain, when that astute politician in a talk with his guests " shadowed out the agitation on the franchise as *the card to play* which would give the Liberals a majority at the next election ". The Franchise Bill passed the Commons, and was thrown out by the Lords. The session therefore was wound up early with a view to an autumn session at which the differences with the Lords should be thrashed out. The Morleys spent part of this vacation in the Lakes, and were visited by the Courtneys. Towards the end of September demonstrations against the House of Lords and in favour of the Franchise Bill were held all over the country. Mr. Gladstone threw himself into the fray with ardour, and Mr. Morley, so wrote his friend Mrs. Courtney regretfully, " has gone in for it, and apparently believes in it all heartily. He thinks that the Franchise Bill, which has been sleeping very comfortably for many years in the Liberal programme, has suddenly become so urgent that delay is almost a crime, and enough to excuse the rioting of justly angry men. So they say after the Birmingham riots ! "

The action of the Lords rejoiced the Radicals, and at the end of the session Morley made a speech which would have done credit to Machiavelli. He was against an immediate appeal to the country. They should delay until the issue between Peers and People had time to ripen. Lord Randolph Churchill, knowing that the Government was discredited, and that dissension prevailed between Radicals and Whigs, was eager to force an appeal to the country. At Manchester on August 8, 1884, he made play with Morley's speech, and his parody of the Radical argument is too amusing to be left out :

" Wait a little," said Mr. John Morley, " at the proper time we will allow the people to vote. Schnadhorst [1] is not yet quite ready, his preparations are not complete, the tissue

[1] Chief Organiser of the Liberal Party.

of fabrication and falsification which we are weaving has not yet had time to cover the country. Ireland, Egypt, South Africa are too fresh and vivid in the memory of the nation." Mr. John Morley, like Felix, the Roman Governor, when being preached to about judgment to come, feebly and stammeringly exclaims—" Yes ! perhaps ! very likely ! but at a more convenient season." Well, now, I am perfectly certain of this—that the Tory party will get their way, and that the appeal to the people which is now going on will produce, and produce very soon indeed, a general election. If Mr. John Morley and his friends imagine that they can rouse this great popular emotion, that they can go careering about the country summoning the people to attend mass meetings in their thousands, that they can loudly and solemnly call upon the people to judge between them and their opponents, and having done all this, can for any appreciable length of time prevent them going into the polling booth and deciding upon what they have seen and heard, they imagine a vain and foolish conceit. The people are being summoned by both parties to come together and give judgment ; and Mr. John Morley and his friends cannot any more avert or delay that decision than the convicted criminal in the dock can delay the sentence of the judge.

At this time Chamberlain, Dilke, and Morley had good reason for hoping that a second rejection of the Franchise Bill by the House of Lords would bring about a dissolution at which the electors, instead of pronouncing condemnation on Mr. Gladstone's Government, would elect a predominantly Radical Parliament. A justifiable calculation, which was, however, to be upset by a compromise between the party leaders.

The Morleys stayed at Greta Hall, Keswick, until September 6. Morley had arranged to speak at Carlisle on the 7th and at Newcastle on the 15th. In reply to a letter from Watson, who thought that criticism of the Government's foreign policy, however well deserved, would be inopportune, besides providing ammunition for Cowen, Morley replies :

All right, be it as seems best to you. I will skate as

lightly as possible over the ice of your 'Egyptian puddle', and will in fact devote fifty minutes out of sixty to the H. of L., and a round rattling invective against the same.

Egypt was indeed a thorn in the side of the Liberal party. At every turn of events there had been room for difference of opinion even among honest Liberals, whose objections to war and imperialism had survived their party's return to office. But apart from these minor variations a new school was now beginning to be formed under the inspiration of Professor Seeley, W. E. Forster, and Lord Rosebery, afterwards to be known as Liberal Imperialists, who favoured expansion all over the world and did not shrink from the wars that might so easily come from a clash of rival imperialisms, French, German, or Russian, in Africa, Asia, or the unoccupied islands of the Pacific.

In 1883 the Egyptian Government had attempted to reconquer the Soudan; but its army had been routed by the Mahdi. Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet felt that the Soudan was a source of weakness, and must be abandoned if the finances and prosperity of Egypt were to be restored. They therefore insisted on the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons from Khartoum; but unfortunately (as we have seen) in January 1884 they entrusted the task to Gordon, who no sooner reached Khartoum than he was fired with the idea of recovering the Soudan and founding a new Egyptian Empire. By the end of the summer he was already beleaguered, but his situation did not appear desperate. He had steamers; and a message of August 24, which reached London on November 25, said: "We have provisions for five months and hope to get in more." In September Lord Wolseley began preparations for advancing up the Nile.

Such was 'the Egyptian puddle' when Morley visited his constituents in September. No wonder that at Liberal meetings in the autumn of 1884 the extension of the franchise and the controversy with the House of

Lords were more popular topics! From Morley's letters to Spence Watson it appears that he wished to keep the Franchise Bill apart from Redistribution and to fight the House of Lords on the issue. In that case a January dissolution would be pretty certain on Radical ground favourable to Mr. Chamberlain and his friends. Morley was in great request. In October they wanted him again at Newcastle. But the treble strain of the platform, of Parliament, and of earning a living was almost more than he could bear. "Is it really *necessary*", he asks his chairman on October 6, "that I should come to a demonstration on the 18th? . . . I have worked hard for the cause—on the Town Moor last year, at Blyth, at Durham, at Carlisle, at Leeds, this year—and I gave my speech on Sept. 15 to my constituents. I am doing too much. Do let me off if you possibly can."

A few days later he visited Chamberlain at Birmingham, and found that there was to be no compromise in the sense of letting other Bills go up to the House of Lords. But "the divulgation of the draft scheme", so he wrote to Watson on October 11, "of course has the effect that one always expected of entirely changing the current of people's interest from Franchise and Lords; and there is the mischief of it".

To Mr. Gladstone he wrote on October 13:

> I heard from Chamberlain that you were under the impression, derived from some correspondent in Scotland, that I had been deprecating any diversion of the agitation on the Franchise into a move against the Lords. May I assure you that nothing could be less correct? A Scotch member asked me whether I did not think that the creation of peers was a better expedient than a dissolution with the double cry of Franchise and Reform of the Lords. To this I replied that I certainly did think so, because if we only once secure a better House of Commons by means of extended Franchise and county redistribution, the turn of the Lords would come pretty speedily. Of course if for any reason the creation of

peers should not be feasible, then my remarks cease to apply to the situation.

In the north of England, where I have passed what should have been my holiday, the voice is clear, and it is this : that the best thing for us would be to have an election with the double cry of Franchise *and* shortening of the arm of the Lords. This was the opinion of leading politicians in Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, and Cumberland. In Northumberland and Durham people are red-hot, and in Newcastle I find even the moderate wing of my supporters calling for abolition as loudly as the rest.

In the interval before the autumn session Morley was writing articles, and planning for Macmillan's a Twelve English Statesmen Series, to which Lord Rosebery eventually contributed *Pitt*; Frederic Harrison, *Cromwell* and *Chatham*; and the editor, *Walpole*. In the first advertisement of the Series it was announced that Morley would write *Walpole*, *Chatham*, and *Pitt*; but after a time he persuaded his two friends to take Chatham and Pitt off his hands. It was not easy to select the Twelve Statesmen. Harrison proposed Alfred the Great and William the Conqueror, but objected to Dunstan, when such great men as Beckett, Henry V., Burleigh, Pym, and Fox were to be omitted. He thought Morley should write Peel and Mill.

Parliament reassembled for the autumn session on October 23, and two days later Morley found time for a lively letter to his sister, which gives us a glimpse of his thoughts and activities :

It must be a vast time since I wrote to you—but you must blame the House of Lords for my default. The Autumn Session has thrown out all plans, and I have been writing two or three articles, so as to be ready to have leisure for the House. Also I have been planning a new little Series of red or other coloured books. To-night, I'm going to give a small dinner party at the Reform, as it is many, many months since I performed that social duty. My guests are few but fit; two Cabinet ministers, to wit

Chamberlain and George Trevelyan; Lord Justice Bowen, Buckle, the editor of the *Times*, and Townsend, editor of the *Spectator*; six in all. Do you want the menu? The chef submitted it to me yesterday, and as amended by my gourmandic judgment, here it is:

Huîtres
Tortue claire
Soles à la dieppoise (*i.e.* with prawns, mussels, etc.)
Éperlans frits.
White Entrée (I forget what)
Salmis de faisans à la etc. etc.
Chateaubriand à la etc.
Canards sauvages
Salad, Soufflet of Crab à la etc.
Herring roes on toast.

Two magnums of champagne, and one magnum of the best claret in London. Don't you wish you were coming? My family, who are indifferent to *petits plats*, are going to Drury Lane, so we shall all come home together by the late train.

There has been some changing in the government during the week, and some said that they would ask *me* to go into office. But I—who have the advantage of being a little behind the scenes—knew better. Nothing has been really vacant except a small post at the Admiralty, which I should not look at. Some papers have taken the line that I ought to have been Irish Secretary, in Trevelyan's place. As I have no particular fancy for finding a knife in my back some day, or for having a detective for a constant shadow, or for being harassed out of life by the Irish members, I am quite content to miss that delightful prize.

Leeds was a splendid affair: the sight was magnificent; and the whole proceedings most enthusiastic and stirring. On Wednesday next [October 29] I go to Birmingham to make a big speech (if I can) in the Town Hall. The Tories may kick up a row,[1] but I fancy my friends there have a good notion of *managing* things. Rose is most likely going with me, and we stay at the Chamberlains, tho' the great man will not be there. Public life is not a bed of roses; the only satis-

[1] By way of retaliation for the Aston Riots.

faction is that everybody tells me I have already built myself a very fine position. But I'm still a good bit of a philosopher, and take all things with considerable composure of mind. One must do something to pass the time from cradle to grave. . . .

P.S.—The idea is that Ld. Salisbury will hold out: if so, great turmoil, and an election in January or earlier.

On November 1 he sends a report of his Birmingham speech to Spence Watson, adding, "If you think that I went too far, drop me a hint", as he and Mundella were to visit Newcastle on the 19th. The political crisis had not yet abated. "It is considered *certain* that the Lords will hang up the Bill again. I hope that our people will dissolve. The sooner that operation takes place (after January 1) the better."

A letter from Harrison praising Morley's article on Carlyle, which had just appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, went on to deplore the political impotence of the Radicals, and described the country as 'on the brink of Niagara'. Morley replied:

Berkeley Lodge, *Nov.* 5.—You are much too good about that little scrap on the Old Prophet. I shall look for yours, but why did you send it to the backwoods [*i.e.* to U.S.]? Spartam nactus es, *hanc* exorna. . . . About Niagara I could fill a volume, suggested by your remarks. But what I should say is more for conversation than for the written letter which abideth. When you talk of the impotence of our wing of the party, remember the Leeds Conference a year ago. Hartington, Courtney, and others publicly derided and scolded us. Mr. G. did not more than half like it. The London Radicals fought us on the spot, in order to get precedence for London Reform over Franchise. Our wing routed them all. Take so really strong a proposal as the inclusion of Irish mud cabins in the Bill. I remember how we were all laughed at by our Whig friends for dreaming of it. Yet now even Tories accept it. Well, that is only an illustration. The Radicals are the strong wing, and the Moderates the weak. You ask our good friend Goschen what he thinks of it, and he has vision.

Then he goes on :

I am not sanguine of great things—and I dare say there may be terrific fractures and reformations. . . . I was horrified to find that the *Times* this morning put into grave type my drastic, half-extemporised deliverances last night. Devil take shorthand, say I.

Next day (November 6) Mr. Gladstone moved the second reading of the Franchise Bill, which had been rejected by the House of Lords in the previous session and was now to be sent up again. On the same day died Henry Fawcett, the Postmaster-General, an old friend with whom Morley had been intimate from the days when they used to dine with Mill at Blackheath. To his sister (House of Commons, November 7) he wrote :

We were all dreadfully shocked here last night to hear of Fawcett's death. He has never in fact been right since his terrible illness two years ago. I am very sorry to think that I shall not hear his hearty voice, or see him striding along over Wimbledon Common, where he and I have had so many jovial walks.

By the way, you may see my name mentioned as a possible successor to his office. I only wish to let you know beforehand that it is not to be thought of, and that I am not in the running for office of any sort at this moment. I dined along with my Cabinet friend last night, and therefore I *know*. I only name the subject to you, so that you may not let things come into your head that would end in disappointment.

At this time a conference was being arranged on industrial and social questions, to be addressed by William Morris, Arthur Balfour, and Hyndman, among others. Morley was pressed to preside, but declined, saying that he had fallen quite behind in economics, and wanted to enjoy a spell of obscurity.

To Frederic Harrison's plea for reconsideration he replied :

The address is really the difficulty. It would cost me an immense quantity of toil; for I am entirely behindhand in

this great controversy, and should have to go over a mass of what has been written by serious men, like you, George, and others in the last three years. It is not like common politics where you only lay about you with a quarter staff, and shout the cry of the party and the hour.

In another letter (to his sister) he mentioned dining with the Prime Minister, whom he found " older a good deal " :

His voice is husky. But in the House he is as splendid and overwhelming a master as ever he was. The place will not be like itself when the time comes for him to leave it. My notion is that he will retire in the course of next spring or summer, when the business of Reform is well over. Then it will be Hartington's turn, and I dare say he will do it very well.

A few days before he had made ' a useful speech ' at Leeds,[1] and had brought the meeting ' thoroughly round ' to his mind. Then, after a week-end in Sussex with Goschen, he had to spend four days speech-making in Newcastle. " I should have relished Paris better, I admit. But it is the tax to be paid for honour and glory."

By the end of November the constitutional crisis was settled by a compromise. To save the face of the House of Lords, it was agreed that Redistribution should be contemporaneous and co-equal with the extension of the franchise. Accordingly, on December 1, Mr. Gladstone introduced a Redistribution Bill. Proceeding on the principle of single member constituencies he disappointed the hopes of those who had counted on some instalment, however small, of Proportional Representation. This project, though strongly favoured by Mill from a desire to give representation to minorities, had always been rejected by Morley, following Dilke and Chamberlain ; but it was so dear to Leonard Courtney that that able and disinterested statesman resigned his post at the

[1] To the Liberal Six Hundred on November 25.

Treasury, much to the regret of his friend, who had thought of him as a future Chancellor of the Exchequer, and expostulated, but in vain. He wished that Courtney had resigned eighteen months ago on Egypt, when "I was too inexperienced", but "*you* might have led an effective protest". On Proportional Representation "you will find . . . no sympathy at all among those large classes who would most earnestly respond to your views on foreign and colonial policy". A perfectly true diagnosis.

Mr. George Shaw-Lefevre[1] had succeeded Fawcett at the Post Office, and Hibbert took Courtney's place at the Treasury. Again "a sisterly soul" was disturbed. "Why did you want me to have Courtney's place?" was her brother's reply. "It would have made an end of me in three months. The work is terrific. No other Minister has so much. I was not asked; but I don't think I'd have taken it. Don't be in a hurry. My time will come, and will come before I want it. *N.B.*—I should have lost *income* by taking Courtney's place. Does not that console you?"

[1] Now Lord Eversley.

CHAPTER V

DEFEAT AND RESIGNATION OF GLADSTONE

FORTUNE provided plenty of excitement for the British public in 1885—the death of Gordon, the Penjdeh scare, the Hundred Million Budget, the Fall of Gladstone, the Radical Programme, the General Election, and the Hawarden Kite. Our first glimpse of Morley is on New Year's Day, when, returning from a Christmas in Paris, he found a birthday present awaiting him from his sister, a pair of slippers, "the prettiest that your needle has ever produced. Thank you for them with all my heart and both my feet." Then he ran on:

> The fender plays a great part in life just now; for the cold is very unpleasant and the skies are very grim. The leaden curtain never lifts, and the sun seems to have permanently retired from business. One gets sick of it.
>
> As for politics—Gladstone is really out of sorts this time, and no small misfortune it is, considering that the state of public affairs decidedly demands a strong hand. Chamberlain and I had one of our modest snacks at the Athenæum on Friday. He was very jovial, in spite of all the cares of state.
>
> I am looking forward to the life of George Eliot, of which I expect a copy any day. I suppose I must write something about it.

From Chamberlain he heard that the Cabinet was at breaking point, and wrote to apprise Watson of the position, January 5:

> The Government are in a very critical condition. It is

almost impossible that they can hold together until the Session begins. They have now got to a point where one set of them or the other *must* have its own way. Then suppose that Selborne, Northbrook, and Hartington were to leave, could the remnant face parliament, with an evacuation policy on the one hand, and a Khartoum expedition on the other? Could they do this especially if Gladstone were at Cannes? No. Then could Hartington make a Ministry, with Chamberlain, Dilke, Trevelyan out of it, and Forster and Goschen in? No. Then Salisbury must come in: he would carry the Redistribution Bill, which is partly his own; renew the Crimes Act; and declare some sort of protectorate in Egypt. Then in November '85, or in January '86, the country would have to say its say upon all these things. If we are right, then Salisbury would be turned out, and the Radicals would come in.

Such are the ideas of some mighty men, as well as of Your humble friend, JOHN MORLEY.

This was not a bad shot at the political future; but he had left out of account the possibility that Lord Salisbury might drop Coercion and angle successfully for the Irish vote. Meanwhile, Chamberlain was doing his best at this time to convert mild Liberals into moderate Conservatives, and to drive the Whigs out of the Cabinet. Unembarrassed by any acute sense of loyalty either to the Cabinet of which he was a member or to its veteran chief, he was making a bold bid for the leadership of a working-class democracy by proclaiming the doctrine of 'Ransom' for the rich, the breaking up of large estates, allotments, the restoration of common lands, graduated income tax, free education, disestablishment, manhood suffrage, and other items of the Radical programme. These declarations of Chamberlain seemed to Gladstone ominous enough. So far from consulting the susceptibilities of his colleagues, he seemed eager to tread on their toes, and to hasten a disruption of the Cabinet. Morley, though very faithful to his friend, appears more than once to have thought that Chamberlain was inclined to go too far or too

fast. But it was mainly a question of emphasis or language. It is true that their views about Egyptian policy had diverged. But on the desirability of an Irish policy which would conciliate Parnell they were heartily agreed, and there is no hint that any serious difference had arisen between them about the planks of their Radical platform, or the relative weight and importance which should be attached to each. No doubt Chamberlain was at this time more of a Socialist, and less concerned than Morley about the mischiefs and dangers of aggressive Imperialism. In his eyes wars and military expeditions were not moral but political questions. On the Transvaal he had shown himself a strong pro-Boer, on Egypt he was described by one of his colleagues as a Jingo. As a rule he opposed Imperialism, because it distracted popular attention from grievances at home and from the remedies which he was expounding. These remedies were his political cards, and he thought the time had come to play them.

This he did with a vengeance, starting at Birmingham on January 5 with a doctrine which was thought subversive of society—that all men were born with natural rights to land, and that owners of property should pay ransom for the security they enjoy. It is the sort of thing that an undergraduate might write, if he were told to blend Rousseau with Lenin and apply the mixture to England. But, as it is the only attempt Chamberlain ever made to lay a philosophic basis for his Radical programme, it deserves attention :

> If you will go back to the early history of our social system you will find that, when our social arrangements first began to shape themselves, every man was born into the world with natural rights, with a right to share in the great inheritance of the community, with a right to a part of the land of his birth. But all those rights have passed away. The common rights of ownership have disappeared. Some of them have been sold ; some of them have been given away by people who had no right to dispose of them ;

some of them have been lost through apathy and ignorance; some have been destroyed by fraud; and some have been acquired by violence. Private ownership has taken the place of these communal rights, and this system has become so interwoven with our habits and usages, it has been so sanctioned by law and protected by custom, that it might be very difficult, and perhaps impossible, to reverse it. But, then, I ask, what ransom will property pay for the security which it enjoys? What substitute will it find for the natural rights which have ceased to be recognized? Society is banded together in order to protect itself against the instincts of those of its members who would make very short work of private ownership, if they were left alone. That is all very well, but I maintain that society owes these men something more than mere toleration in return for the restrictions which it places upon their liberty of action.

The whole passage, and others in his speeches, show how little of Morley's philosophy Chamberlain had imbibed in their twelve years of political brotherhood. In the *Recollections* Morley quotes a letter in which he admonished his leader against the danger of resting his case on 'natural rights':

> It has a good sound, and has been a powerful reforming weapon before now. But I don't think it a true way of putting things, and certainly not the most useful and fertile way on British platforms at this time of day. No right is worth a straw apart from the good that it brings, and claims to right must depend not upon nature, but upon the good that the said rights are calculated to bring to the greatest number.

As a Burkian and a Benthamite, Morley says he was as much dismayed by Chamberlain's appeal to Nature "as if I had seen a deinotherion shambling down Parliament street to a seat in the House of Commons".

But a few months later when 'Jus', an anonymous writer in the *Times*, attacking Chamberlain's proposals for taxing wealth and land, quoted the authority of Mill, Morley seized the opportunity of defending his friend, and proved by ample citations that Chamberlain's

doctrine and language compared with Mill's were as water to wine. But he took care not to identify himself with either Mill's *Dissertations* or Chamberlain's speeches. "Mill's authority", he wrote, "is variously valued by different economists, and I myself should prefer to approach the question of land reform from more positive and purely utilitarian grounds than some of his propositions which I have quoted. But if your correspondent appeals to Caesar, to Caesar he must go."

The strength and fervour of his own Radicalism came out in a telling speech at Glasgow on February 10. He spoke more tolerantly indeed than Chamberlain of the Whigs and moderate Liberals. But if they were entitled to their say, so were the Radicals: and it was idle for timid members to say that for a Radical to speak above his breath was to break up the party. He was very hopeful about the new democracy both in home and foreign policy. Some believed that the new voters would be for war. He prophesied that they would be for non-interference and peace:

> But by non-intervention they will not mean letting the dust thicken on slumbering piles of unanswered despatches. They will not mean indifference to the affairs and the actions of our neighbours. No; it is those who prize peace most, and are most alive to the perils to which in so vast an Empire as ours peace is incessantly exposed, who will urge the most vigilant attention to what goes on in every part of the world, the most careful anticipation of results, the keenest eye for the connection between the policy of these nations and all that concerns their rights and the interests of our own. But it must be the real concerns, the undoubted rights, the substantial interests, not mere figments and chimeras.

He brought his ideas on foreign policy to a practical issue by denouncing in advance any action which might be contemplated in the direction of a conquest of the Soudan. This was an exhibition of true political and moral courage; for on February 5 the news of the fall of Khartoum and the death of General Gordon had

caused a tremendous sensation. Gordon was a hero of the press; and now that the expedition to relieve him had failed, hero became martyr. The Tories insisted that he was a victim, not of his own misconduct, but of the Government's vacillation; and cries for revenge rent the air. The emotion excited by Gordon's death was always a puzzle to Mr. Gladstone, who recalled the comparative indifference of the British public at the death of Cavagnari in Afghanistan during the Beaconsfield administration. Feeling that more than enough lives had already been sacrificed in the Soudan, Morley was deeply concerned at the prospect thus opened of another series of costly operations against the Mahdi.

Two days after the Glasgow meeting he wrote to his sister:

The public prospect is more grievous still. If Gladstone is really going to plunge us into a Soudan war, he will be an apostate of the blackest dye, and I for one mean to tell him so to his face.

I had a splendid meeting at Glasgow. They went vehemently with me about the Soudan. But of course, when the time comes, they'll stick to Gladstone. The last time that I was in Glasgow was in 1879 to hear that holy man denounce the Afghan War. The Afghan War was not half so bad as a war for the equator will be.

The two new appointments [to the Cabinet] are curiously balanced, as usual. Rosebery is a Jingo, Lefevre is of my persuasion and yours.

Returning home he found a letter from Frederic Harrison,[1] who painted the crisis in the blackest colours; yet the majority of people, he believed, had not abandoned that strong aversion to foreign adventures and jingo imperialism which defeated Lord Beaconsfield in 1880. Morley agreed:

The judgment of the people who won the great victory

[1] Harrison and Herbert Spencer, with Morley's support, had formed an Anti-Aggression League in February 1882 to resist imperial expansion.

of 1880 is exactly where it was then. The *Times* did not give a good idea of the animated and vehement approval of my protest at Glasgow. At Aberdeen, I understand, the same feeling was equally marked. The Nonconformists are staunch as ever, so far as I can judge.

C. and D. ought to have come out. Perhaps they will, but I suspect *not*.

You may depend on *my* remaining firm to what I have said, however much discomfort, private and public, may follow. I do not know what can be done exactly—but I make no doubt that we shall be able to make a creditable show for sensible principles in the House of Commons, when the time comes. We shall soon see. It is not possible to concert the precise line, until we know the Great Sophist's line of defence. Some say (who ought to know) that he is on the very eve of retirement, and won't defend at all. Then, what a débâcle !

I read your address in the *F.R.* and noted your fiery darts striking into the ribs of the *P.M.G.* Why don't you write something to help in this miserable mess ? It is no good limiting yourself to Newton Hall.

Morley well knew that his line about Egypt and the Soudan was unfavourable to his political ambitions ; and he was too sensitive not to smart under the reproaches of the press, which included a nasty attack inspired by Cowen in the *Newcastle Chronicle*, insinuating that he was not merely a subservient tool of the Caucus, but also a hunter for place, notoriety, and social position. " The mean dog," Morley wrote to Watson. " But I'll have it out some day with him."

His courage was now to be put to a severe parliamentary test. On February 19, Mr. Gladstone announced the Cabinet's decision that British forces should be employed to overthrow the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum, and that Lord Wolseley had been instructed to frame his military measures with that end in view. This new policy was popularly known as the policy of Smashing the Mahdi—a phrase taken from one of

Gordon's letters. Though this decision pleased the Opposition, it did not prevent them from presenting a vote of censure. On February 23, Sir Stafford Northcote moved that the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt and the Soudan had involved great sacrifices of valuable lives and heavy expenditures without any beneficial results, and had rendered it "imperatively necessary" to take measures to assure a stable government to Egypt and to those portions of the Soudan which are necessary to the security of Egypt. The quotation from Gordon on which Northcote and most of the Government critics especially relied was from one of his later despatches:

As far as I can understand, the situation is this. You state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zebehr. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold on here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator, and leave you the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennaar, Kanala, Berber, and Dongola with the certainty that you will eventually be compelled to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties, if you would retain peace in Egypt.

On February 21, Morley had written to Watson about the vote of censure:

I am to move my amendment on Monday, after Northcote and before Gladstone. He follows me, and will knock Northcote's head and mine together. It is trying, but I'll do my best. . . . Bryce has put down a wishy-washy amendment; but the division will be on mine—so he won't do much harm.

Morley followed Northcote. It was one of the most trying moments in his life; but he always looked back to it with pride and satisfaction. His amendment was framed to satisfy the Radicals below the gangway and at the same time to exclude the possibility of Tory support:

That this House, while refraining from expressing an

opinion on the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government in respect to the affairs of Egypt and the Soudan, regrets the decision of Her Majesty's Government to employ the forces of the Crown for the overthrow of the power of the Mahdi.

Morley's speech was not a long one. He felt that he was standing between the House and the Prime Minister, who was to follow. But he contrived to say a good deal in a short time. He had been told that if he had drawn his amendment on the lines of that tabled by his friend Bryce, he would have had more supporters. But a far more important question than the number of passengers on a train was whether it would set them down at the right station! His views had been called doctrinaire, but would not the position have been far better if doctrinaire philosophers had had weight in the counsels of Her Majesty's Government? He described the Mahdi as a sort of Pope—more of a Pope than a Sultan—and seemed to think that his influence over the Arabs was directly due to our interference. He would cease to be formidable if he were left alone. No doubt if the British people had nothing else to do, no other tasks or burdens, and plenty of money to spare, there might be something to be said for trying to civilise the Soudan; but we had vast responsibilities elsewhere. Gordon's case for "smashing the Mahdi" reminded him of Bartle Frere's case for smashing Cetewayo by way of performing "a duty to civilisation". We did so, and, "under the same General [Wolseley], who is now in the Soudan, we established a new government consisting of thirteen chiefs. But the whole fabric fell to pieces almost immediately, and if you set up a similar fabric in the Soudan it will fall to pieces more quickly still":

> I am not arguing the question upon the ground of morality and justice—though it would not be very hard to show that to carry on a sanguinary war without any beneficent aim is not only a political blunder but a very hideous moral mis-

demeanour. . . . The point I wish to press is this, that it is a waste of national strength and a waste unredeemed by any good object. . . . To-day, as every Member of the House knows [he referred especially, no doubt, to the dispute with Russia], our serious interests—even in some quarters possibly our territorial security—are menaced in almost every quarter of the globe. At such a moment to tie our right hand behind our back, in order to wage a random and aimless crusade against the barbarians of the Nubian desert, is not only a tremendous error, but one of those signs of infatuation which history marks as the omen of a national catastrophe.

This brought him to the conclusion. Believing that the policy of smashing the Mahdi would involve an unjust, barren, and sanguinary war, " I feel bound in spite of private and public ties to put on record my protest against the beginning of so unfortunate a policy ".

To get anything like a complete view of the perplexities and complexities of the military and political situation at this time one must read the whole debate ; for neither in the *Life of Gladstone* nor in his *Recollections* is Morley's treatment of this important moment at all satisfactory. On the Conservative side Chaplin, who followed, made much of the obscurity and ambiguity of the Government's policy and of Gladstone's explanations. He accused Morley of belonging to the ' Perish India ' school, and said he was the sort of reformer who would reform the Empire out of existence. When he added that Morley wanted to withdraw from the Soudan, Morley interjected : " As soon as practicable." Chaplin disapproved entirely of this policy, but admitted that it was clear and intelligible, whereas the Government's proposals were purposeless and unintelligible. He was for getting rid of the Government, and setting up a stable rule in the Soudan. Then came Harcourt's speech, which satisfied Morley and saved the situation for the Government by a very narrow majority.

As we have quoted the most damaging passage from Gordon, on which the Conservatives especially relied for

their indictment of the Government, we must now give another which Harcourt cited with great effect against the policy of annexing the Soudan. "The Soudan", said Gordon, "is a useless possession—ever was and ever will be so":

> Larger than Germany, France and Spain together and mostly barren, it cannot be governed except by a dictator, who may be good or bad. If bad he will cause constant revolt. No one who has ever lived in the Soudan can escape the reflection: What a useless possession is this land! Few men, also, can stand its fearful monotony and deadly climate. . . . Therefore I think Her Majesty's Government are fully justified in recommending its evacuation, inasmuch as the sacrifices necessary towards securing good government would be far too onerous to admit of such an attempt being made. Indeed, one may say it is impracticable at any cost.

Commenting on Gordon's memorandum, General Stewart had 'quite agreed' that the Soudan "is an expensive and useless possession". Harcourt, who was really in full agreement with Morley and against the imperialist school of Goschen and Forster, dwelt on all the arguments against a Forward Policy, and even quoted with obvious relish a witty saying not very complimentary to the Cabinet, that they had changed their policy from 'Rescue and Retire' to 'Butcher and Bolt'. He claimed that the vast majority of Englishmen desired the evacuation of the Soudan and of Egypt. So far as the Soudan was concerned this 'Little England' policy found favour, and was maintained until the Fashoda crisis.

A note from Lady Courtney's diary helps us to understand the position and to inhale a little of the Parliamentary atmosphere:

> Great excitement over death of Gordon and clamour for a forward policy. The press almost unanimously imperialist. The Government decide to go to Khartoum, and smash the Mahdi and make a railway from Suakin to Berber. Conservative vote of censure supported by Goschen and Forster.

Leonard and Mr. Morley lead below the gangway against any further operations than may be necessary for the safety of our troops, who are in a somewhat critical position.

Listening to the debate on February 24 she noticed the weakness shown by Government speakers, "very mortifying to Liberals", each man speaking from a different point of view and giving different reasons for going to Khartoum. On the 25th Morley wrote to his sister:

My speech was not very wonderful oratorically; for I was hurried by the sight of Gladstone waiting to follow me—like a thundering express engine with its steam up. But it made its mark, and has been the text of important speeches since. I shall not get many men to come with me, but I know that vast quantities of people outside are of my way of thinking. Your old friend Courtney and I sit side by side—and cheer away.

On the 27th, before the division, Morley wrote to Watson:

Harcourt made a first-rate speech last night; strong in my direction. Dilke, not otherwise. They have thrown down the gauntlet to Goschen and Forster. The prevailing opinion here at this moment is that they will be beaten, or will win by too narrow a shave to carry on. But you will know the result as soon as you get this. If the Tories come in, they say they will dissolve. In that case you will soon see enough of me, and too much.

Parnell, with that characteristic preference for political strategy over moral principle which was soon to prove fatal to the Home Rule cause, led his followers into the lobby against the Government on both amendments, though they propounded precisely the opposite policies. On the main Conservative amendment it was indeed a narrow shave, but the Government had a majority of 14, and Mr. Gladstone with his usual courage determined to hold on. Morley was well pleased. A respectable minority of 112 voted for his amendment.

"Our vote", so he wrote to Harrison, "was very satisfactory":

> We hardly counted on more than 40 (exclusive of Irish) and we had 70, including such men as Lubbock, Rathbone, S. Smith, etc. But we must keep the Old Man in, if we possibly can. Harcourt made a first-rate speech on our side. I told those whom it concerned, that if they gave way to Goschen, I and others would abstain, and the word was salutary.
>
> Lead the Left wing! As well chain the sandstorm of the desert—to borrow the Old Man's figure.

In this letter to Harrison there is a comment on French politicians, as he had found them at Christmas:

> I have faith in France and her sons in spite of all. Clemenceau is able, bright, and honest; but he is a light weight, and as you say, to think so discouragingly as he does of his action is a terrible weakness.

About home politics Harrison was unconsolable. "What a Nemesis", he cried, "that the men of '80 are to have five wars on hand at once." But in this enumeration he included the impending "big war with Russia" over the Penjdeh dispute, which was to be averted by a happy mixture of firmness and conciliation.

After these doings in Parliament Morley thought it was necessary to explain himself to his constituents; and he tried to get John Bright to go down with him to Newcastle. But Bright was 'horrified' at the idea of speaking. He had quite lost his appetite for meetings and would go to none. So on April 1 Morley went to Newcastle alone, to address the General Committee of his Liberal Association. By this time he could say that his amendment and his protest against the new campaign in the Soudan had been neither platonic nor empty of results. By Goschen's own admission the Radicals below the gangway had "distorted the policy of the Government". Thanks to that and to the pitiless logic of events—the danger of a war with Russia—the policy of smashing the Mahdi was in process of being dropped.

From Egypt he passed to the Russian question and the Indian frontier. In spite of Chaplin he was not a member of the 'Perish India' school, nor was he a sympathiser with the barbarous despotism of Russia. But what of the dispute? It turned on a tract of steppe inhabited by 5000 people, which the Russians had occupied. One of the leading military authorities in India had told them that to settle the Russo-Indian question they must drive the Russians out of Turkestan and the Caucasus. That was political madness—"you might as well try to scale the moon". There was much talk of an inevitable war:

> I utterly hate and distrust all this talk about manifest destiny and inevitable conquests. It is nothing else but the most stupid fatalism. They say this conflict is written in the stars. I do not believe in governing by astrology. Remember what Lord John Russell said—and he is a man you cannot get rid of by labelling him a member of the Peace Party. He said that, looking back on all the wars of the last hundred years, he did not believe there was one, given a decent and proper temper between the parties, which might not have been settled without resort to arms.

The 'manifest destiny' of a war with Russia about the Indian frontier was surely a barbarous and foolish doctrine. Nothing but harm could come of annexing troublesome frontier districts. His policy would be to maintain contentment in India, and to avoid increasing the burdens of military taxation on the people of India. But he was hopeful of a peaceful solution. "There are many clouds", he concluded, "on our Imperial horizon, but the French statesman was right who said we must take nothing tragically and everything seriously." It must have been no little satisfaction to the member for Newcastle when his Committee proceeded to pass a unanimous resolution in support of the policy he had expounded.

In April, at a meeting of the National Liberal Federation in Birmingham, Spence Watson moved a resolution

on Foreign Policy, which brought him two letters from Morley.

Putney, *April* 11.—The worst of the [National Liberal] Federation is that you could not carry a stronger resolution, if you tried. The more the affiliated associations, the greater the difficulty of getting honest and uncompromising expressions of opinion. On all that I thoroughly share your scepticism of the said Federation.

On Monday I shall most likely give notice of a question to Mr. Gladstone, asking him why he does not come out of the Soudan. I should not wonder if, when he answers it, he announces that they *are* coming out.

R. Churchill, it seems, is all for ' Scuttle ', and is going to say so.

House of Commons, *April* 16.—I am sorry that I cannot be at Birmingham to-morrow. I should have liked to support your resolution, though I should have been none the worse pleased if it had been still more emphatically worded.

Some of our friends may be afraid of weakening the hands of the Government in a time of great difficulty. All such fears strike me as being groundless. Lord Rosebery said at Manchester that the policy of destroying the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum was adopted because the opinion of the country at that moment would endure nothing else. This reason, I confess, does not strike me as a very convincing one at the best. Whatever force it may ever have had, is now clean gone. I never hear anybody in either political camp pretend that the opinion of the country is any longer in favour of renewing the campaign in the autumn for the sake of destroying the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. Most people believe that if the constituencies could be polled to-day, there would be an overwhelming majority for coming away from the Soudan, bag and baggage, to-morrow.

Whether that be so or not, it will strengthen the Government, and not weaken it, to be told plainly what is, in this particular matter, in the minds of many of the very warmest adherents of their general policy. Why should we allow the fire-eaters to have it all their own way in declaring what is public opinion and what is not ?

On May Day he wrote again from the House to Spence Watson :

The notion to-day is that the breeze will blow over. But the Government have in no case covered themselves with glory ; much the reverse. I wish they were *out*—but that is only a secret thought.

May 7. (To the same.)—Joe [Cowen] and I have at last practically cut one another ; tho' without explanation or cause given on either side. It's best, but it's unpleasant. He is a despicable impostor. Excuse such unchristian speech.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *May* 8. (To his sister.)—I have been pretty busy here—being on a select Committee, and also responsible for many matters in the ordering of the holy Radical Church. The worst trial of this scene to me is the necessity now and again of a late night, and one late night makes mischief with me for two days after. I fear this hatred of bad hours on the part of my otherwise excellent constitution will stand in my political way. . . .

Before September we shall have to make up our minds whether to leave B.L. next year or not. If I felt quite sure that I should remain in Parliament, I should be tempted to migrate nearer to my work ; for instance, to somewhere in Courtney's neighbourhood.

I suppose I *shall* remain in Parliament. I have a safe seat free of expense pressed upon me at Leeds, and another at Birmingham, but I feel bound to stick to my friends on the Tyne, as long as they stick to me.

If you want to come to a big meeting you had better be here on June 16, when I preside at St. James' Hall, and Harcourt will speak. Say the word and a choice seat shall be kept for you.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *May* 19. (To the same.)—I am scribbling this in a Committee, with questions and answers flying through the air—so you must forgive incoherencies. The session is a hard and troublesome one, and has many anxieties. How the Ministers stand it, I can't tell. 'Tis bad enough for a private member, with small responsibilities :

however, as I've become a sort of a leader in a small way, I've some responsibilities of my own. The general impression among folks who know is that the Government is going to pieces. Gladstone is almost worn out.

On Sunday night I dined at Lawson's—the proprietor of the *Daily Telegraph*—to meet the P. of Wales. It was a party of about 18 men—including the D. of Sutherland, Dilke, Randolph Churchill, and sundry travellers. The dinner was of course admirable. Then we went upstairs to a very handsome drawing room—where there was provision of iced drinks, cigars, etc., and a beautiful string band, playing in a back room. It was wonderfully free and easy and pleasant. H.R.H. was very jolly, and chatted to me about Newcastle. I left at about one, and I fancy they were in for a long night—as the royal guest likes the latest possible hours.

The settlement of the dispute with Russia over the Afghan boundary was the last important performance of Gladstone's Second Administration. On June 8 the Government was defeated on a detail of the Hundred Million Budget—" an accident tempered by design ", Morley called it. It was far better to fall in this way than in a dispute about Coercion for Ireland, over which a Cabinet split seemed unavoidable. Mr. Gladstone resigned. After receiving a sufficient assurance that the Opposition would not embarrass the Government during the remainder of the session, Lord Salisbury formed a Government, and both parties began to prepare for a General Election in the autumn.

In June Morley was probably occupied in revising for the press a volume entitled *The Radical Programme*, which was to serve as ammunition for the Radical wing of the party. It was published at the end of July, and will be considered in the succeeding chapter. But he was also active on the platform. On June 5 he went to support the candidature of his friend Richard Chamberlain at Islington, whom he described as one of those " who know how to be thorough without being

impracticable ". That was the kind of reformer they most wanted. Of impracticable reformers there were too many. The worst kind of all, he said, " is the man who insists on taking the second step before he has taken the first ". The practical reformer " is the man who, without sacrificing a jot of conviction or principle, yet has a regard for times and seasons, measures his action by his resources, is often content to take one question at once, and shapes his policy with a view to the most fruitful results ".

The approach of the General Election was making Morley a good party man. At least he was more inclined to criticise the enemy outside the gate than the enemy within the gate. He even excused many of the blunders committed in Egypt by attributing them to the unscrupulous pressure of the Tories ; and observed drily of the omniscient critics who were now pointing out what should have been done : " It is surprising what an immense distance you can see after the thing has happened."

At this time Churchill and Chamberlain, the two rival auctioneers, were putting up their commodities for sale, and a good many of them seemed to be very similar. Both were thought to be dangerously democratic ; but Chamberlain's supporters naturally insisted that his goods were the genuine articles, whereas Churchill's were fraudulent imitations. Morley likened Churchill to a brigand who had broken into the Liberal camp and was now pretending that the spoil he so generously dispensed was original Tory property.

On June 10, a day or two after the fall of Mr. Gladstone's Second Administration, Morley wrote to his sister from the Athenæum :

> The affair on Monday was rather a surprise. *We* are uncommonly glad of it. It has relieved the Cabinet of a pretty certain split. The notion is that the Tories *will* come in. I wish them joy of the job. We'll bundle them out head foremost by the end of the year, D.V.

I had a most useful little trip in Ireland. Spencer asked me to dine with him, but I declined. I had a couple of hours talk with him. Also I breakfasted with a Jesuit father at the Catholic college. Also was Gibson's guest (Gibson is a leading Tory M.P.) at Trinity College—where they had a great party of jolly fellows. I had beautiful weather and two very smooth crossings.

On Saturday I'm most likely going to Newcastle to see a big ship of war launched at Armstrong's. But I may take it easy and stay at home instead. One effect of the upset of the coach will be to shorten the session, and to relieve us Liberals of the duty of being much at the House.

From June 15, when Morley took the chair at St. James' Hall for Harcourt, we may date a political friendship founded on a hearty agreement about foreign and Imperial policy, which lasted—with only one short but very unfortunate break—down to Harcourt's death. It was on this occasion that Morley defined Radicalism as "only Liberalism very much alive".

In the early days of July, while the Conservative Government was winding up the session, Morley and Spence Watson began to lay their plans for the election campaign at Newcastle in October and November. Feeling that his own seat was by no means secure, Morley persuaded Mr. George Trevelyan—the most popular of Northumbrian Radicals, who had done more since the early 'seventies to advance the county franchise than any one except John Bright—to be principal speaker at a county demonstration in Newcastle a month or so before the poll.

A lively diary, from which we have already quoted, portrays the political scene in London at the end of the session. Never had defeat given more satisfaction to a Ministry and its followers. It was thought that a split in the Cabinet over Coercion could not otherwise have been avoided; for Chamberlain, Dilke, Lefevre, and others would not have acquiesced in the measures Lord Spencer, who was then Viceroy and member of the

Cabinet, had demanded as necessary for keeping order and suppressing crime in Ireland. But few had bargained for what happened. In Lord Salisbury's new Government Sir Stafford Northcote was removed from the leadership of the Commons into the House of Lords; Sir Michael Hicks Beach was his nominal successor; but the real policy-maker was Lord Randolph Churchill. At his instigation the Crimes Act was dropped, to the consternation of the whole ascendancy party in Ireland, and to the disgust of many honest Tories in Britain, who had little expected to behold their own Viceroy—Lord Carnarvon—repudiating strong measures and reversing the Coercionist policy of his Liberal predecessor. Carnarvon's ideas about Imperial Federation fitted in with a friendly demeanour towards Irish Nationalism. His appointment was understood to be a temporary one to tide over the General Election. It was calculated by Conservative wire-pullers that the loss of the Irish vote might prove fatal to Liberal prospects in many of the English and Scottish boroughs. A mild intrigue with Mr. Parnell, spiced by a few speeches from Lord Salisbury and other Conservative leaders—who adumbrated the possibility of reconciling Irish self-government with a scheme of Imperial Federation—and a temporary relaxation of police measures against boycotters and moonlighters, were after all a cheap price to pay for safeguarding society from a Radicalism which threatened to abolish privilege, property, hereditary government, and established religion.

Chamberlain meanwhile was bidding for the leadership of the Liberal Party. The National Liberal Federation, centred at Birmingham, was under his control and inspiration, and its organisation was being employed to circulate the *Radical Programme*.

Morley contrived to praise and support Chamberlain without adopting his provocative language. At Whitechapel, on July 8, he welcomed the reversal of Coercion in Ireland and Lord Salisbury's practical abandonment

of the Soudan. But was there ever such political profligacy as this turning of coats by the party which had persistently advocated Coercion and the Forward Policy ?

Turning to their own programme, he found in the reform of the land laws a popular item which Salisbury and Churchill could not borrow. Whatever else it might consent to change, the Tory party would stand fast by the land laws and the landlords. He had been sitting on a Select Committee in the House of Commons at which evidence was given about agricultural wages. Near Woodstock, on the Duke of Marlborough's estate—so one witness had testified—wages were from eight to ten shillings a week. We can hardly wonder, when such conditions prevailed in many parts of southern England, that Morley's pity and indignation were stirred. He felt for the rural labourer, and wanted to improve his lot. If a way could have been found after the General Election to reconcile the claims of Hodge with the demands of Pat, the future of English Radicalism might have been as prosperous as its leaders hoped in the spring and summer of 1885.

After the session Mr. Gladstone went off for a sea trip, leaving the field clear for the Birmingham party, which was working might and main to shepherd Liberal candidates into the Radical fold, while Lord Rosebery and others preached unity and sought it under the Gladstonian umbrella. The Whigs were inclined to sulk. Lord Hartington's silence was afflicting to moderate and independent Liberals like Courtney, who felt that in a party wire-pulled and dominated by Birmingham there would be no real freedom. At the beginning of August the Courtneys spent a long afternoon with Morley at Putney talking politics before separating for the eventful autumn. He was not very happy about the outlook, and seemed to be leaning more to Courtney and less to Chamberlain :

But with whom he will eventually side when the fight comes [the quotation is from Lady Courtney's diary] it is

difficult to say. He is always interesting to talk to! In the course of the afternoon Lord Dalhousie turned up and joined in the talk. Discussing the health of leading politicians, both Mr. Morley and Lord Dalhousie declared that Mr. Chamberlain would not see sixty years. I think he is more wiry than they suppose. He himself said to me at Burnham [a week or two before] that he meant to be Prime Minister at 100. Lord Dalhousie told us a story which made us all laugh heartily. He had met Mr. Gladstone in the country; and in the course of talk Mr. G. said sadly, "I see nothing before us but infinite quackery." Meanwhile, Mr. Chamberlain makes speeches openly bidding for the leadership, and throwing out socialist suggestions to catch the popular vote.

Never were politics more confused, or more dependent upon personal idiosyncrasies and accident. At this juncture the Dilke and Crawford divorce proceedings deprived the Radicals of one of their most active leaders; while W. T. Stead, Morley's old assistant and successor at the *Pall Mall Gazette*, dropped politics to embark on sensational revelations of London immorality which "awakened the public conscience, sold the paper, and eventually landed him in prison" on the eve of the General Election.

From this turmoil Morley escaped with his wife and nephew to the Continent for a brief holiday. They tried Ostend, then went on to Switzerland. On August 11 he wrote to his sister Grace from Rigi-Kulm:

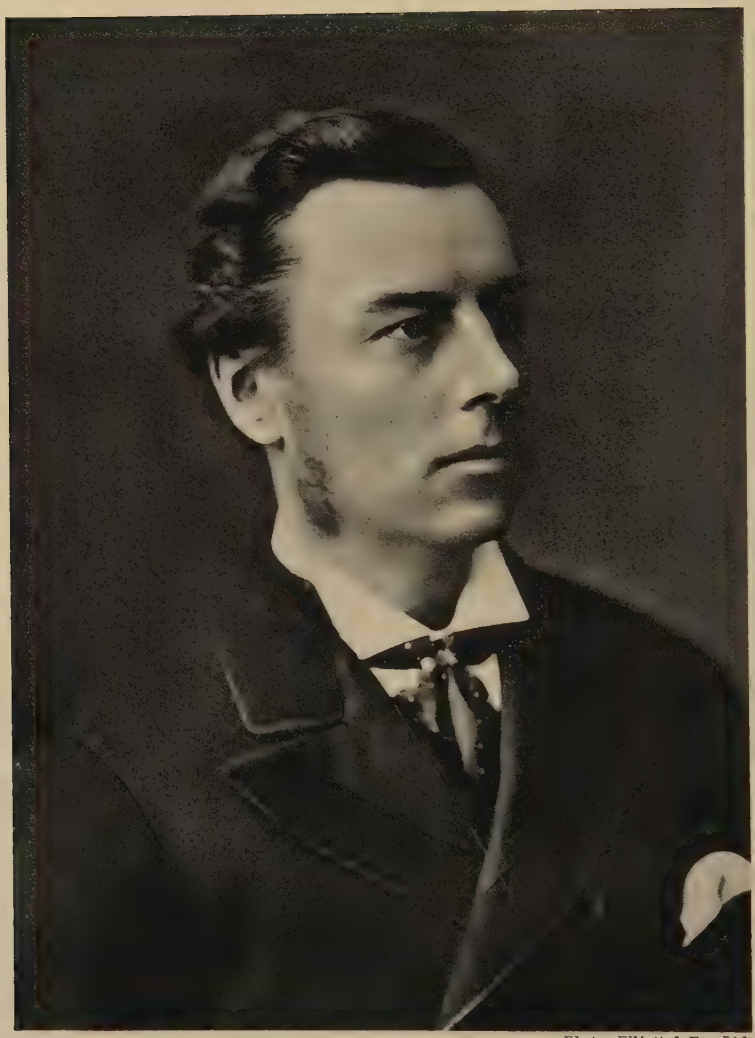
As you know, we came away—Rose, Guy, and I—with a notion of having three weeks at Ostend. But we found the prices fabulous, and the landscape stupid, and the diversions monotonous. So we took train for Lucerne—some 18 or 19 hours. We travelled all night and by the 2nd class, but got on very comfortably. Of Lucerne itself 24 hours was enough. It is very lovely, and the hotel was capital, but I longed for height. So we came up here—a trifle of 6000 feet—about twice the height of old Helvellyn. The hotel is on the very top—with grassy slopes on every side—and an indescribable

panorama. The air is crisp and fresh, and in the evening severely cold.

Two days later he wrote again from Grindelwald, refreshed and invigorated by the Alpine air:

Yesterday I was able to walk for nearly eight hours, half of it up a long stiff hillside in a broiling sun. A fortnight ago I should have turned sick at the thought. We have been for nearly a week at Grindelwald in the heart of the high mountains. The scenery is most superb, and the air is as good as air can be. My faculties are returning, tho' the enemy has still left my right arm very stiff and awkward. . . . To-day they have all gone on a glacier with guide, axes, and all the rest of it. I have no head for these giddy exploits, and so I remain on *terra firma*. I hope they won't tumble down a crevasse.

He expected to be back in a week. "After my return, I shall go to pay a visit to a noble friend of mine in Scotland, most likely, and in fact I expect to be pretty much of a bird of passage until the elections are over. Not a pleasant prospect for a man of my quiet temperament. I saw at Bruges on a sign 'Café pour les gens tranquilles', and thought of taking up my abode there."



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JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN, 1880

CHAPTER VI

THE RADICAL PROGRAMME—1885

In the rising pools and swelling streams of democracy during 1884 and 1885, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Randolph Churchill were fishing assiduously from opposite banks with coarsish tackle, and, in respect of bait, with no very scrupulous regard for the rules and refinements hitherto observed by British political anglers. Both were very good platform speakers, and both were trying to outdo moderate rivals in their own party as well as their professed opponents. In the towns the two were well matched. Among rural labourers Mr. Chamberlain had the best of it, aided as he was by his faithful henchman Jesse Collings, with the captivating lure of Three Acres and a Cow. In Morley, moreover, Chamberlain had an invaluable lieutenant, who by speech and writing could impart literary grace, philosophic consistency, and moral fervour to the new Radicalism and its *Programme*. In the spring and summer of 1885, as the General Election drew near, the two friends arranged to issue their proposals—the unauthorised programme, it was called, because it never received Mr. Gladstone's *imprimatur*—in the shape of a substantial pamphlet which should provide ammunition for Radicals in town and country. The *Radical Programme*, "reprinted with additions from the *Fortnightly Review*", was issued by Chapman and Hall in an appropriate red cover at the end of July 1885. The Preface was signed by Mr. Chamberlain. The Introduction looks like

Morley's work, and he is to be credited with at least three of the chapters, those, namely, on Religious Equality, Free Schools, and Ireland. His hand is also plainly visible in three others dealing with Machinery, Measures, Taxation and Finance; in fact, on most of the 263 pages. In the gentle art of self-advertisement Morley did not compete with the author of the Preface. Although the book abounds in laudatory quotations from the speeches of Chamberlain, Dilke, and some other Radicals, the name of John Morley does not occur at all. For reasons undisclosed he was content to remain in the background, dropping altogether on this occasion the policy of the signed article.

More remarkable still, save on the assumption that the stage was being prepared for a new Leader of the party, is the treatment of Mr. Gladstone. Though Bright's authority is sometimes cited and sometimes criticised (but always with respect), Gladstone is practically ignored. Moreover, all Chamberlain's possible rivals in the Liberal party are similarly treated. Yet Chamberlain was able to get the book circulated throughout the constituencies by the National Liberal Federation from its central offices in Birmingham. It was a strong move in a bold game to get rid of the Whigs, to convert the Liberals into Radicals, and to promote Mr. Chamberlain to the leadership on the prospective retirement of Mr. Gladstone. The old Radicalism, we are told (p. 20), had failed in the constructive element, " and the object of the present series of papers is to state and examine in detail a comprehensive scheme of legislative action upon which the energies of Radicals may be concentrated, and which may form a rallying ground for the party. The main features of the *Programme* will be those enumerated by Mr. Chamberlain several years ago in the *Fortnightly Review* under the heads of Free Church, Free Schools, Free Land, and Free Labour." No wonder that Chamberlain was able to say in his Preface : " Without pledging myself to all the proposals contained in the

following articles, I welcome their appearance, and commend them to the careful and impartial judgment of my fellow Radicals."

Seeing, then, that the *Radical Programme* consists of articles originally edited or written by Morley and probably revised by him during the spring of 1885 in concert with Chamberlain and Dilke for the purpose of promoting their policies at the General Election, we shall take it to represent Morley's political opinions as well as Chamberlain's. This joint manifesto is a crop of projects ripe for legislation which they fondly expect to be harvested by the first Radical administration in English history.

Their hopes were based on a calculation of the results of the new franchise. "The Parliament of 1880", we are reminded at the outset, "was elected by three millions of electors, of whom it was estimated one-third were of the working class. The next House of Commons will be elected by five millions of men, of whom three-fifths belong to the labouring population." An examination of electoral prospects in the towns suggested that Radical gains would be enormous, and that the creation of single-member districts would lead to the extinction of Whiggism. "The buffers on which timid Liberalism has hitherto relied against advanced Liberalism will henceforth disappear." Radicals would be arrayed against Tories. A middle party need no longer be feared. Neutral politicians would not be able to maintain themselves under universal household suffrage. "The visionary figment of a third party rests upon no other foundation than the purely hypothetical leaning towards neutrality with which the average Englishman is absurdly credited." What about the counties? Hitherto the rustic had been depicted as deaf to the siren voice of Reform. "The Church and the parson, the hall and the squire, are the natural and impregnable rallying-places of Conservatism"; but the writers confidently anticipated that the vote given to the agricultural

labourer would create new demands and release new forces, social, economic, and educational. The new measures necessary for these ends would "sound the death-knell of the laissez-faire system". If Hodge was not strong enough to take the initiative, an organised body of politicians would do it for him:

> If it be said that this is communism, the answer is that it is not. If it be said that it is legislation of a socialist tendency, the impeachment may be readily admitted. Between such legislation and communism there is all the difference in the world. Communism means the reduction of everything to a dead level, the destruction of private adventure, the paralysis of private industry, the atrophy of private effort. The socialistic measures now contemplated would preserve in their normal vigour and freshness all the individual activities of English citizenship, and would do nothing more spoliatory than tax—if and in what degree necessary—aggregations of wealth for the good of the community.

The general theory underlying this programme is boldly defined as "the intervention of the State on behalf of the weak against the strong, in the interests of labour against capital, of want and suffering against luxury and ease". All land, for example, should be held subject to the right of the community, as represented by the local authority, to expropriate the owner for any public purpose at a fair value; that fair value being, as Mr. Chamberlain always put it, the price which the willing seller would obtain in the open market from a private purchaser, with no allowance for prospective value or compulsory sale. This right, once legalised, would further and cheapen schemes of sanitary and general improvement, including the provision of housing for the working classes in the towns and of cottages in the country with large gardens attached to them. Landed proprietors would have to pay more taxation through a revision of the death duties and through the rating of vacant ground in towns on its full value. It was said that the application of reforms like these might

provoke a reaction against the interference of Government in the daily life of the community and in the relations between classes. But the friendly attitude of the daily Press, and especially of the working men's papers, to these Radical proposals, and even to such a measure as the restitution of illegal enclosures, was sufficiently reassuring:

> Those whom Gambetta styled the *nouvelles couches sociales* may possibly assimilate themselves to their superiors, acquire their prejudices, look at things from their point of view, mechanically subordinate themselves to their interests, and be content to remain the instruments of their own effacement. But if like effects are generated by like causes, if there is any dynamic force in legislation, if the law of progress is not an imposture, the onward movement must continue. Conservatives, by outbidding their opponents or profiting by their mistakes, might periodically return to office but not to power.

"Thank heavens!" some one might exclaim, "we have a House of Lords." On this subject the writers were almost contemptuously indifferent. It was a mere bogy:

> The last thing which any Radical would desire, or would dream of doing, is to reform that Chamber in any way. Its defects are inseparable from its existence. It does not indeed materially affect the course of legislation; it may postpone the passing of important measures; but it does no more. It is a source of vexation and impatience to every earnest reformer; it is not, and it can never be, a permanent obstacle in the way of reform.

In fact, a consideration of the minor mischiefs which the peers had recently done or attempted, leads to a conclusion which one of the authors discovered eight years later, when engaged in ploughing the sands, to be dismally far from the truth:

> The House of Lords would almost indeed seem to exist for the special purpose of reducing Conservatism to an

absurdity, and the utmost which the advanced Radical could wish is that it might place itself in serious collision with the House of Commons. Radicalism has everything to hope and nothing to fear from the issue of such a struggle. But the Lords are too wise in their generation to do anything of the sort. They protest first and they register afterwards.

Five-and-twenty years were to pass by before our confident preacher of the new Radicalism, after suffering many a defeat and political humiliation at the hands of this impotent Chamber, himself become a member of it, had the satisfaction of helping to carry a measure which cut its claws, or clipped its wings, without changing its character.

In connection with the hereditary chamber the authors took stock of the Monarchy. They had both been, and no doubt they both remained in an academic sense, republicans, along with Dilke, Joseph Cowen, and many of the early Radicals. But they now recognised that a great majority of Englishmen were attached to the throne. Consequently, "there is no reformer, however advanced, into whose practical purpose it enters to overthrow the throne any more than it does to restore the Heptarchy". The emotion of loyalty, closely analysed, yielded two elements—respect for tradition and for a blameless sovereign:

An attack upon the Crown at the present time would be rightly spoken of as impetuous and rash. On the other hand, it may be said that if the monarchy were proved to be the cause of real political mischief, to minimise or to endanger the freedom of popular government, no Radical, and probably no large class of Englishmen, would exercise themselves to retain it. It would be impossible to rally either Liberals or the English public round an institution that did not work harmoniously with the democratic forces of the country. The Crown therefore is likely to remain undisturbed for a period which the practical politician need not take account of. The utmost that can be said against it is that it occasionally operates in a manner favourable to the opponents of

political reform and that, as it promotes a good deal of sycophancy and snobbery, its social influence is of questionable value.

After some critical remarks on the Royal Titles Bill, they admit that the expense of monarchy in a great and opulent country like this "cannot be alleged as an argument against it". One thing indeed, in the interests of the Crown, our Radicals earnestly deprecate: "an imperial, and especially a military policy undertaken at the royal instance and wish". A great war and a grave reverse might conceivably, they say, produce a state of feeling disastrous to the existence of the Throne. In fact, "the Monarchy, it may at once be said, could not hope to survive the results of a great European struggle in which our armies should be unsuccessful, and which should be understood to have been entered upon at the express wish of the Court". But short of this, so long as the royal functions were ornamental and consultative, the Throne had nothing to fear from Radicals, who had "something else to do than to break butterflies on wheels".

After this faint praise of one branch of the Constitution, we learn without surprise that Radicals in 1885 looked upon the Established Church in a "very different light", and in fact had no use for it at all. The American Union and the Colonial democracies were alike in rejecting the theory and practice of a religious establishment. Toryism supported it, because Toryism believed in the preservation of class privilege. "The Church is an organisation of privilege, and the alliance between parson and publican, Bible and beer, which is always talked about at the period of a General Election, is something more than a phrase, and is not merely the alliterative invention of the malignant Radical." It was therefore proposed to abolish 'the priestly caste', and break up that 'political quadrilateral' of squires, clergy, farmers, and publicans "which is the main obstacle in the path of all social improvement".

The measures to which the Radical Party will "address itself as soon as may be" are comprised in the three 'F's', Free Land, Free Church, and Free Schools, to which were added important reforms of Local Government and Taxation. Two considerable chapters are devoted to the disestablishment of the Church and to the establishment of a system of Free Education. Towards the first, we are told, social forces, political forces, intellectual forces, spiritual forces, all unite in one undeviating and indeflectible direction. The argument is strong enough. Only sixty years before, no Nonconformist without procuring an indemnity could hold the most insignificant office under the Crown. But the Liberal Cabinet of 1880 included a Presbyterian, a Quaker, and a Unitarian; "and there are some who think we may even live to see the Unitarian nominating the Archbishop of Canterbury". Had Nelson been a Roman Catholic he would not have been allowed to win Trafalgar; the "Establishment was worth calling an Establishment in those days"! But in 1885 a Roman Catholic might be Governor-General of India. Such a transformation of political rights "has reduced the theory of a State Church to a gross farce, an unseemly mockery, and a truly repulsive scandal, which would have filled the great champions of its cause like Hooker and like Burke, with whom it was an honest and a solemn cause, with utter horror and dismay". Then the writer, whose identity will be transparent to any one familiar with Morley's style, even if he has not read *The National Struggle for Education*, set himself to show how little right Churchmen had to talk about Church property. Had not Parliament already recognised the right of the State to appropriate the surplus revenues of the Irish Church, and had not the establishment of Ecclesiastical Commissioners thrown many corporate funds and estates of the Church of England into the melting-pot? Clearly the process of Disestablishment would have to be accompanied by some measure of disendowment. Religious

sects not belonging to the Established Church in England already possessed 21,000 churches and chapels against 14,000 possessed by the Establishment. In view of these figures and of the number of the Nonconformists, "we may well ask what in the name of common sense is to be made of the talk about a National Church?" The case for maintaining the Church Establishment in Wales would not bear stating; for there the Church had lost five-sixths of the Welsh-speaking people. The Church in Scotland was not alien from the opinions and habits of the majority of the people, but "it is evident to any politician that a very slight puff of wind will suffice to overthrow an arrangement that has so little to say for itself as the Church of Scotland. The Scotch members, who pawkily put themselves down in Dod as 'not opposed to eventual Disestablishment', know that an accident might precipitate the eventual into the actual."

It was by his speeches advocating ransom that Chamberlain earned the sobriquet of Jack Cade from Lord Iddesleigh. But, after making all allowance for joint authorship, the reader cannot help feeling from time to time, in turning over these pages, that his more philosophic friend also used pretty strong phraseology in liberating his political soul for the benefit of Radical electors; as when, for example, after describing the miseries and degradations caused by overcrowding in the slums of large towns, he winds up by reminding society of the warning of Danton: "If you suffer the poor to grow up as animals they may chance to become wild beasts and rend you."

Lord Salisbury would have thrown the cost of urban improvements on all kinds of property. The *Radical Programme* emphatically endorses Mr. Chamberlain's proposition that "the expense of making towns habitable for the toilers who dwell in them must be thrown on the land which their toil makes valuable without any effort on the part of its owners". This taxation of unearned increment, as well as the proposal for a graduated and

progressive tax on inheritances and income, are supported by the authority of Mill, and are described as " the lever to which we shall have to look for the social reforms of the future ". Chamberlain's famous doctrine of Ransom is not repeated. Robert Lowe had once described the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a mere taxing machine " intrusted with a certain amount of misery, which it is his duty to distribute as fairly as possible ". This view, we are told, will not be true when both taxation and expenditure are reformed. Not that the teachings of Bright and Cobden on the subject of public economy are altogether overlooked. " By all means let us have the most severe economy in every branch of the services " ; but so long as there is a full return for expenditure on objects which the nation approves, " taxation on equitable principles cannot be on too liberal a scale ". In this connection the tendency of modern legislation to enlarge the function of the Government is admitted, together with the advantage which may be derived from operations conducted on an extensive scale by a Government with comprehensive powers. In many cases, it is suggested, Parliament would do better to invest the central or municipal authorities with certain new functions " rather than to encourage the creation of huge private interests and monopolies ".

Turning to taxation in general, the writers prefer direct to indirect. The food taxes, which still amounted to four millions annually, should be repealed. Nor should the poor man be called upon to pay as much as 3d. for an ounce of tobacco which would cost less than a penny, were there no duty upon it. The cost of the Army could be reduced, if it were made a mere defensive service ; and the nation could save much military expenditure " by putting an end to useless, offensive, and costly military expeditions into every quarter of the globe ". The cost of the Navy, on the other hand—it was under eleven millions in 1884—would probably increase whatever party might be in power.

We have now touched upon all the items in the *Programme*, with one important exception: the policy unfolded in the last and ninth section, "Local Government and Ireland", which proved to be the tail that wagged the dog, or should we not rather say, a Gladstone's rod that swallowed up all its competitors? It will be generally admitted, so runs the argument of Chapter IX., that the political subjects of paramount attraction to British Democracy belong to Home policy, and that outside this department it is difficult to kindle popular fervour. If we ask what subject of domestic concern commands "the widest interest at the present moment to all classes of the country, and what is calculated to exercise the most vivid and direct influence upon our national development, the answer must unquestionably be the reform of Local Government, using that expression in its widest sense and not restricting this reform to any one of the three kingdoms". As the great work of the first Reform Parliament in 1832 was the reform of municipal corporations and of Poor Law authorities, as that of the Reformed Parliament of 1868 was the extension of democratic local government to the business of National Education, so "the great work of the Parliament to be elected after the organic change of the constituencies in 1885 will be the crowning of the edifice of local government in some parts of the United Kingdom and the foundation as well as the completion of its structure in others. Then, and not till then, shall we be able to say that the rights of citizenship exist and are exercised equally in all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and that the relations on which alone the inhabitants of England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland can live happily together are equitably settled." So far as England is concerned the writers are enthusiastic about municipal government. Apart from its material achievements in the provision of public health, parks, baths, free libraries, and other institutions, it had proved an educational agency in the art of governing. It had provided

public-spirited individuals with new opportunities; it had "opened the way from parochial politics to imperial statesmanship". To effect economy of municipal force all local functions should be unified and concentrated in the town council. The same principle should be applied to urban districts, where still greater confusion and overlapping existed owing to separate areas and separate authorities for highways, burials, health, Poor Law, etc. London also required unification under one local authority with general and supervisory powers. In the rural districts local self-government was still lacking, the paramount authority, quarter sessions, having no representative character. But something more than unification of authorities, simplification of areas, and the introduction of democratic self-government into rural districts was required. The four countries, including the principality of Wales, all required separate treatment. "Let us now therefore look at the matter from what may be called the national point of view. The problem here is to entrust Wales, Scotland, and Ireland with the free and full administration of those of their internal affairs which do not involve any Imperial interest." The cases of Scotland and Wales are then briefly but sympathetically considered, and before dealing at more length with the case of Ireland the writers dwell upon the need for decentralisation in order that Parliament may be free for important business :

> Recent experience has made it perfectly clear that parliamentary government is being exposed to a strain for which it may prove unequal. The overwhelming work thrown upon the Imperial Legislature is too much for its machinery. The enormous complexity of modern legislation, to say nothing of difficulties caused by obstruction and party politics, indefinitely postpone many measures of reform, no matter how imperatively they may be called for. The Imperial evil is not less than the domestic. What, for instance, can be more deplorable than the systematic neglect at Westminster of Colonial and Indian topics of the highest

moment? It is obvious that no mere extension of local government upon the ordinary and restricted lines will relieve the parliamentary congestion which has long since become a national calamity.

In Ireland the local mischiefs visible in Great Britain were intensified by the interference of an alien authority and by the additional factor of irritation through the prejudice of race and nationality. "A control which in any case would be borne with some impatience becomes odious and intolerable when it is the badge of a foreign supremacy." Of this, Dublin Castle was the embodiment, and was felt to be synonymous with English rule over Irishmen. The Castle controlled every branch of the administration—the police, the magistracy, local finance, and all departments of local government. A very minute examination convinces the writers that in Ireland the domination of an alien race paralyses local effort and annihilates local responsibility. They argue that the continuance of such a system is unjust and irritating to Ireland, useless to England, and dangerous to both. Englishmen have to neglect their own affairs in order to meddle with the business of Irishmen. A solution is therefore proposed. Elective county boards should take the place of grand juries in Ireland. National councils should be established—one to sit in Edinburgh, one in Dublin, and one, if the Welsh people desired it, in Wales. These councils might be elected by the ratepayers, or by the county boards. In Ireland this council would take over the work performed by the Irish Local Government Board, the Boards of Works, Education, Fisheries, etc., and also the business of private bill legislation. The establishment of a National Council, elected by the Irish people and endowed with National authority, would enable the Imperial Parliament to delegate many powers and duties which at present necessitated the neglect of our own more important matters. "For Ireland it would mean the beginning of a new life; it would

substitute a Government founded upon trust of the people in place of one founded on distrust and coercion." Under present conditions the task of promoting the well-being of the Irish people was hopeless. Dublin Castle was isolated. Bishops and priests stood aloof. Nationalist M.P.'s would not approach it. A wall of adamant divided the Irish Government from the Irish governed. Out of 4000 magistrates most were landlords or landlords' agents, and about four-fifths were Protestants. It was expedient therefore " to recognise and satisfy, as far as may be done without danger to the integrity of the Empire, the natural desire of the Irish people to legislate for themselves on matters of purely Irish concern ". The establishment of a National Council was " most important in regard to the solution of the Irish question ". They had to remove the root of Irish discontent. An Irish Council " would give scope for the ambition of Irish politicians, and would divert their attention from the irritating strife with England ". It would relieve the British Parliament and redeem Great Britain from an Imperial reproach:

> Surely, it is no slight blot upon the escutcheon of that country which is the mother of Empires as she is the mother of free Parliaments—the chosen home of liberty, the parent of all institutions resting upon a foundation of freedom—that she should as yet have failed to endow an island, an integral part of herself, and separated from her only by a few leagues of ocean, with a constitution that commands the loyalty and affection of its inhabitants.

This might be called a sentimental consideration, but an alienated Ireland was a weakness to England and a weakness to the Empire. The Irish garrison consisted of 30,000 soldiers and a vast constabulary force. Whole regiments were locked up in the sister island because of our unwillingness to concede terms of administration with which she might be reasonably content; and, moreover, the state of Ireland was constantly cited, not only

abroad but in India and the Colonies, as a dishonour to English statesmanship. On this note the *Radical Programme* concludes, and the reader might well feel as he closed the book that its authors regarded their scheme for the removal of Irish grievances and the satisfaction of the Irish people as of paramount importance.

Protection is left out of the picture. Except in a few large towns Free Trade had not been seriously attacked. Chamberlain may have feared to divert attention from his own reforms and so play into the hands of Hartington and Goschen, who were strongly opposed to his programme. But a volume of Chamberlain's speeches, published a few weeks after the *Radical Programme*, shows that on this issue he was still as staunch a Cobdenite as Morley himself; though he usually treats the Fair Traders with more ridicule than argument. Moreover, in making land reform in town and country his main theme, Chamberlain was following Cobden's last prescription. The landless labourers in the country and the slum-dwellers of the towns were attracting attention at last, now that they had got the vote. Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* had already become a very popular book among the Radicals and Socialists of those days. Chamberlain was not a single taxer or a collectivist; but the *Radical Programme* was calculated to attract both. Morley had always been a land reformer, though he had no practical grasp of the subject. On questions of municipal needs and administration he sat at Chamberlain's feet. For the agricultural labourer he felt as much sympathy as Jesse Collings or Joseph Arch; and though he would not talk 'natural rights', he supported allotments and other measures on utilitarian grounds.

On Ireland again the author and editor of the *Radical Programme* were so far in practical agreement. Chamberlain had been foremost for conciliation as against coercion in Gladstone's Cabinet. He had even proposed to get rid of Dublin Castle, and to hand over the control

of purely Irish affairs to an elective National Council. In the summer of 1885 Chamberlain and Dilke had arranged, with Parnell's approval, to visit Ireland, expecting, no doubt, to secure the Irish vote in Great Britain for Radical candidates. But Parnell suddenly cooled off. His tactics changed. He began to negotiate with Lord Carnarvon and the Tories. The visit was dropped. Mr. Chamberlain's tone about Ireland changed. Seeing that the Irish vote was to be given to the Tories, he began to criticise Parnell's programme of a separate and independent Parliament which would erect a protective tariff against all English manufactures ; and he ostentatiously declined to enter into competition with the Tories for the Irish vote. His speech at Holloway (September 8) extorted an approving leader from the *Times*. The next at Glasgow (September 15) brought him a letter from Morley ' deprecating his anti-nationalist line ' ; and thenceforward the two friends for the first time began to draw apart on an important political issue —the most important, as it turned out, of all the issues they had laid before the country.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1885

On reaching home at the end of August, Morley found a note from Frederic Harrison, who was feeling the political stir: "I am now quite clear that Chamberlain is the man. I am heartily with all his late manifestos. And especially I go with his really bold and sound declaration as to taxation, as to Ireland, and the rest. Chamberlain is our Gambetta." So Morley must have thought when, refreshed by his sojourn in the Alps, he plunged with hope and ardour into the thick of the contest. Some light on his ambitions and labours is thrown by two letters to his sister:

Berkeley Lodge, *September* 1.—It was a very fine expedition, and I don't think there can be much wrong with me, considering that I was able to walk 8 or 9 hours a day for four days in succession up steep mountain roads in a blazing sun. I am not sure that the mischief is all out of me, for my head is still now and then ache-ish, and my arm uncomfortable. But the gout must take its chance like everything else, until after the election. Meanwhile I stick to whisky-and-water.

The prospect is rather appalling; for besides my own constituency I have immense work to do elsewhere. I have heavy tasks in London as President of the London Union; and have to speak at Cambridge, Newport, Nottingham, and perhaps other places—for I am in much request. As Dilke has got into the divorce court, he will not speak much or at all, and his engagements are partly thrown on me. This

afternoon I go down to Birmingham to spend the evening with Chamberlain, and plot mischief for our Tory rascals.

On Monday I go to Newcastle, to see that all is in order there. The project of Copeland has utterly exploded. My friends assure me that I am perfectly safe—but one never knows. I think of putting up at Tynemouth next week: the air is more salubrious than Newcastle itself. If you thought of seeing any of the fun, a good chance would be about Oct. 28, when Trevelyan comes, and we shall have a big affair. I fancy the poll will be some day between Nov. 10 and 20.

Chamberlain will speak at a great meeting in London on Sept. 23, when I shall be in the chair.

The Union Club, Newcastle, *Sept.* 12.—I came down here on Tuesday, to see how the political wind was blowing. My visit has been most satisfactory in every way. People have all been most kind and cordial, and nothing could be more promising. Our arms are all sharpened and polished, and powder and shot are ready in abundance. The Tories are in a very unhappy state, I am glad to say. They won't have Hamond, and Hamond vows that he will push aside Bruce. Some think that Bruce will be dropped, and Hamond left to fight on his own account. There is even a delightful story, too delightful to be true, that H. says if Bruce will withdraw, he will do the same, and leave the two sitting members to go on sitting without a contest. This I don't believe for a moment. But everybody on both sides now treats it as a foregone conclusion that Cowen and I shall go again. I suspect that will be so.

My friends have warned me to "keep out o' the road" of the strike at Armstrong's. But it came into my head that I might as well try to bring about a settlement, and yesterday I had a most active day—of which there will be an account in the *Echo*, and that account I'll send you. We are not yet out of the wood; but I am in pretty good hopes that we shall bring the business to an end before the day is over. If so, it will be a famous feather in my cap, you may be sure. I hope by the time you get this to be seated at my family breakfast table at B.L.—but am not quite certain. My good

friends are uncommonly deliberate. Apart from politics, it will be a downright good service to mankind to have stopped a strike of between 4 and 5000 of the best artisans in the world.

A day or two later he was back in London, well pleased about the strike, which was soon afterwards brought to an end.

On September 17 at Clapton, where Charles Russell (afterwards Lord Chief Justice) was Liberal candidate, he described his own political character: "I am a cautious Whig by temperament; I am a sound Liberal by training; and I am a thorough Radical by observation and experience." It is clear from this and many other passages in his speeches that Morley was striving to conciliate moderate opinion and to gild the pills which Chamberlain wanted to force down the throats of moderate Liberals. "Though Radicals," he cried, "we are not Impracticables; though we are advanced men we are not Irreconcilables." Chamberlain's proposals, he assured the Claptonians, "are safe and conservative. Every year I am more convinced of the wisdom and integrity of his point of view." But he showed his independence of Chamberlain in his treatment of the Irish question. He was not prepared to drop reform of Irish government because Parnell was talking of a protective tariff: "I believe that to institute a protective tariff for Ireland—whether it is to be done by a Tory-Parnell coalition, or by any other means and in any other shape—would be thoroughly mischievous to that unfortunate island; and we should do all in our power to persuade the Irish people to avoid it." But the sophism of Protection was no more 'wicked' in the mouth of an Irish Parnell than in the mouth of an English Chaplin, and it should not alter their policy. It would not alter his: "Short of separation I will go as far as I can to meet the views of the Irish people."

Thus the Irish policies of the two friends were diverging,

and their public statements could not be reconciled. But strong comradeship kept them together; their Radical programme still stood; it was the banner round which the contest raged hottest; and they were the standard bearers. On September 24, at the Victoria Hall—known to theatre-goers as 'the Old Vic'—Morley took the chair for Chamberlain. The theatre was packed with 4000 people. A big crowd outside, unable to gain admission, cheered alternately for Gladstone and Chamberlain. This overflow, according to the *Times*, was harangued by Radical politicians who there and then designated Chamberlain as Gladstone's successor in the leadership of the Liberal party. Morley's speech on a close inspection strikes one as cooler and more guarded than a leader might have expected from his chief of staff. Perhaps he knew what Chamberlain would say, and did not want to endorse it all. Yet he paid a warm tribute to his friend's untiring energy and devoted public spirit, and hailed his triumphant tour in the North as better than any royal progress. He had endowed with life the dry bones of Liberalism, and had forced people to think on grave questions which it was disgraceful either to ignore or neglect. Of Gladstone's Manifesto he spoke rather critically, adding, however, that it was not a comprehensive statement of final truth and an exclusion of error like the Athanasian Creed, but rather an opening up of questions to which the constituencies and the new Parliament would have to find answers. The main thing was to win the elections. As President of the London Liberal Union, he was concerned about party divisions and dissensions. In fourteen out of the fifty-nine London constituencies the Liberal cause suffered from dual candidatures. If persisted in, this would mean a serious loss of seats, and he urged that in such cases the disputes should be submitted to an impartial committee, who would decide which candidate had the best chance of election on the understanding that the other would withdraw. To meet such cases he promised to introduce

a Bill to provide for a second ballot where a candidate who headed the poll had failed to secure a majority of the votes. Chamberlain took up the point. Not only did he endorse the chairman's suggestion, but promised to show his own readiness to make sacrifices to party unity. The sacrifices he proposed to make created a political sensation. It was one of the best fighting speeches in the whole of Chamberlain's pugnacious career. He began by drubbing the Tories for calling themselves by new names—Conservatives, Liberal Conservatives, Constitutionalists, and Tory Democrats: "When a private individual assumes a number of aliases it is not unfair to suppose that he is ashamed of his identity, and that his past life is open to suspicion." Then came a passage, which may have been distasteful to the chairman, about the mysterious negotiations that had gained Parnell's support for the Tory party:

> We have been solemnly assured that it is not the result of an alliance; it is not a compact; it is not a bargain which has secured for them the support of the Irish National Party in the House of Commons and in the country. No, Gentlemen, it is a fortuitous coincidence that just on the eve of a vote of censure the whole Tory party became suddenly converted from the policy of repression and coercion, which up to that moment they had consistently advocated, to a policy of conciliation which had previously only received the support of a few Radical members like your chairman to-night.

Lord Iddesleigh had instituted a comparison "between myself and Mr. John Cade".[1] Chamberlain took this in good part. Not so the criticisms passed on his programme by Goschen, who still sat on the Liberal side, though he ought to be classified as moderate Conservative rather

[1] A month later (on October 20) Lord Iddesleigh speaking at Henley substituted Robin Hood: "I have been found fault with for likening the policy of Mr. Chamberlain to that pursued by John Cade; but if that is not the policy of Jack Cade, it strikes me that it is Robin Hood's policy. The proposal is to take from the rich and give to the poor." See *Times*, Oct. 21, 1885.

than Liberal. Goschen relied on Gladstone's Manifesto, which he said did not include Chamberlain's Radical proposals. Chamberlain replied that they were not excluded. There were three points on which he had laid special stress. The first was to remedy the incidence of taxation so that it should press less heavily on the poor. On this question he was satisfied with Mr. Gladstone's declaration. His second point was free schools.[1] His third was land reform in town and country:

> If I am right, these views will find adequate expression and they will receive due weight and attention from the party leaders. If I am disappointed, then my course is clear. I cannot press the views of the minority against the conclusions of the majority of the party; but it would be, on the other hand, dishonourable in me, and lowering the high tone which ought to prevail in public life, if I, having committed myself personally, as I have done, to the expediency of these proposals, were to take my place in any Government which excluded them from its programme. In that case it will be my duty to stand aside, and to lend a loyal support to those who are carrying out reforms with which I agree, although they are unable to go with me a little further. The sacrifice will not be one of very great personal merit, for I have not found official life so free from care that I should be unwilling to fall back once more into the ranks, and, in a humbler position, to lend what support I can to the common cause.

This so-called 'ultimatum' was honourable to Chamberlain. He had worked hard at his programme for ten years, and he had now reduced what he considered the immediate practical essentials of Reform to a minimum. But there was something rasping, if not grasping, in his attitude, and in the manner of presenting this humble sacrifice to party union. It was intimated that he had not been a very loyal colleague in the late administra-

[1] He proposed both to provide free education and to reduce indirect taxation, making good the double loss by increasing and graduating the direct taxes on property. His ideal was 'equality of sacrifice' among taxpayers.

tion, and that he had shown little sensibility to the susceptibilities of those who stood in his way. He had certainly given the impression that ambition was his guide. A general election was an awkward moment to choose for accentuating differences of opinion among Liberals. He need not have called Hartington 'Rip Van Winkle' and Goschen 'the Skeleton at the Feast' just then. As he sowed, so he reaped; and most of the Liberal newspapers denounced him for what, on the face of it, was entirely creditable. The question is of such supreme importance in public life that Chamberlain's answer to the attacks made upon him for his Victoria Hall speech deserves to be put on record. It was at Bradford on October 1:

Before I sit down I would ask leave to say one word as to my personal position, which has been, I will not say misunderstood, but at all events, misrepresented, by those who affect to be the guides and leaders of public opinion. The very same writers who a short time ago denounced me for raising this question in order to secure my personal advancement are now equally indignant because I have stated my determination not to purchase the ordinary rewards of political ambition by the sacrifice of the cause that I have at heart. I am accused of dictating terms to the Liberal party and to its great leader because I have said that I could not consent to enter any Government which deliberately excluded from its programme those reforms which I have been advocating as of prime importance throughout the length and breadth of the land. I may be mistaken in the weight that I attach to those proposals. I may have overestimated their popularity among the people; and, if so, it is quite right that others should lead where I shall have failed to obtain your support. But that I should purchase place and office by the abandonment of the opinions I have expressed, that I should put my principles in my pocket, and that I should consent to an unworthy silence on those matters to which I have professed to attach so great an importance, would be a degradation which no honourable men could regard with complacency or satisfaction.

What is the complaint that I have to make against the present Government? It is that they are acting and speaking in office in absolute contradiction to all they said and did in opposition. I say that that is conduct which is lowering to the dignity of public life by whomsoever it is practised. I should like to quote to you the opinion of a great authority upon the subject, and who may perhaps not be unwilling to be reminded of his former expressions. It was Lord Salisbury who said, when he was Lord Cranborne and a member of the House of Commons, "Our theory of Government is that on each side of the House there should be men supporting definite opinions, and that what they have supported in opposition they should adhere to in office, and that every one should know from the fact of their being in office that these particular opinions should be supported. If you refuse that, you practically destroy the whole basis upon which our form of government rests, and you make the House of Commons a mere scrambling place for office. You practically banish all honourable men from the political arena, and you will find in the long run that the time will come when your statesmen will become nothing but political adventurers, and that professions of opinion will be looked upon as so many political manœuvres for the purpose of attaining office." Lord Salisbury is now in office, but how far he and his colleagues are supporting the opinions they expressed in Opposition, let their actions and their speeches—aye, and their silence—tell. For my part, I accept the precept and I reject the example. I am told that in so doing I make it impossible that I should ever again be called upon to serve the country. I imagine that is a decision which will rest with a higher tribunal than the editors of London newspapers. But office for me has no attraction unless it may be made to serve the cause I have undertaken to promote, and if that reward is denied me, or is beyond my grasp, I will be content to leave to others the spoils of victory.

Many criticisms can be made of Chamberlain's political career. It is difficult to reconcile Chamberlain the Radical Free Trader with Chamberlain the Imperialist and Tariff Reformer. But the change of mind and party

in his case was intelligible and gradual. A decent interval of ten years elapsed between the Liberal and the Conservative administrations in which he was a prominent member. No one can accuse him of office-seeking in a base sense. He was no political weathercock.

I never heard Morley question his friend's integrity. And indeed Chamberlain's public record will compare favourably with the practice of the succeeding age, when almost every leading statesman sacrificed party, colleagues, pledges, and principles with bewildering precipitancy for no other obvious reason than that it seemed to him of imperative importance to the nation that he should obtain or remain in office.

To one who would understand the mysterious forces that sway public opinion and twist the lives of those who seem to guide it, no study can be more fascinating or dramatic than the history of the Radical programme and the fate of the two captains who built the ship, loaded it, and then after ten years of co-operation, when they were in sight of port, met with a storm, fell into a dispute, joined issue, and remained thereafter in lifelong opposition to one another.

About this time Morley made up his mind that he would not continue to vote for Women's Suffrage. It was a relapse from grace which he felt would grieve the Spence Watsons; and his political conscience forbade him keep silence. His opinions were usually so firmly held, and his mind so steadfast, that his vacillation on this question is the more surprising. It is true that some of his early passions (such as Republicanism and Disestablishment) were laid quietly on the shelf when, as member of a Cabinet, he had to pursue the attainable or the second best. His support of female suffrage as a factor in the emancipation of the sex was not a passion, but a deliberate endorsement (in 1869) of Mill's fine pamphlet; and, remembering with what admiration he used to advert to *The Subjection of Women* in later years, I was not a little surprised to come upon the

following in a letter to Spence Watson of September 18, 1885 :

Here is a serious matter for you to think over. I do not intend to vote for female suffrage any more. I fear this will be painful to you and your wife—and it is not pleasant to me. But it is so. Now, my dear, good fellow—honestly and simply, I'll (*quietly*) make way for somebody more to your mind on this point—on the least hint. You made me Member—with a confidence, a generosity, and a courage which I shall never forget. I mean, *you personally*. If I've changed my mind about female suffrage, you have a right to change yours about J. Morley. Don't write—but talk things over with your wife. We must meet—that's the long and short of it. But please let me know when you think we ought to open the battle—if I am to remain your standard bearer—because I have other engagements to make.

Then he referred to his successful efforts to settle the strike at Elswick :

You would be pleased at my bit of work at Elswick. Blessed are the peacemakers ; but cursed apparently is piecework.

This letter is doubly remarkable ; it admits an inconsistency and perpetrates a pun.

Probably his change of mind sprang from a conviction that the propertied woman's vote would prove reactionary, and set back some of the causes, such as religious equality, secular education, justice to Ireland, and a peaceful foreign policy, about which he cared more. But whatever his reason for the change, his method of announcing it was above reproach and worthy of imitation by good men in like circumstances. The lapse was forgiven, and Newcastle began to get up steam for the election. Hamond, a more formidable candidate than Bruce, was eventually chosen as Conservative champion. Cowen remained a suspicious friend, with a strong local hold and a powerful newspaper. The Cowenites, it was generally believed, would be glad to

see the candidate of the Liberal Association defeated by Hamond. Tactics had to be carefully studied; for the ground was treacherous. On October 28, Mr. George Trevelyan presided at the annual dinner of the Newcastle Liberal Club. Morley, responding to the toast of the Houses of Parliament, passed some pungent criticisms on a plan for reforming the House of Lords which had been put forward by Lord Rosebery. His noble friend was 'on a false scent'. What Morley wanted was a reform of procedure in the House of Commons. "As it now stood, life in the House of Commons was idleness without rest, industry without work, argument without persuasion, and majorities without power." The county demonstration took place on the following night in the Town Hall. Meanwhile, Morley had been addressing meetings all over the country, with occasional breaks. On one of these (September 28) he and Mrs. Morley dined with the Courtneys in town, and discussed political prospects. Every one was talking of Chamberlain's ultimatum at the Victoria Hall and his rivalry with Gladstone. Morley remarked that Chamberlain's popularity throughout the country was enormous, perhaps even equal to Gladstone's. Would the Old Man give way? Mr. Gladstone's Manifesto had relieved and satisfied Courtney. It confessed errors in Egypt and the Soudan, and rather staved off the Radical programme, including Church Disestablishment. This last item had been pressed forward by the Liberation Society, and Lord Salisbury had announced that the Church was in danger, "but even Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. John Morley, and the leaders of the Liberationists", said the *Times*, "were eager to make known that its postponement was deemed expedient".

Two days after this conversation Morley was at Cambridge. "A famous meeting," he wrote. "I stayed with Stuart at Trinity and slept in Harcourt's bed."

How strong in the summer and autumn of 1885 was Chamberlain's hold on progressive sentiment is shown

by a glance at the London and provincial press, and is attested by those who remember the election campaign. Of all the points in the Birmingham programme, the proposals for a reform of the land laws in town and country were the most popular. 'Three acres and a cow', the bait which Chamberlain and his worthy henchman Jesse Collings dangled before the newly enfranchised agricultural labourer, was greedily swallowed, as well it might be; for the land monopoly—the concentration in the hands of a few large proprietors of almost the whole agricultural area of Great Britain—had made the smallest plot of freehold a prize of great value. Anxious to know how Mr. Chamberlain's bold offers of land to the landless would work out, Morley applied to his friend Frederic Harrison, who had previously helped to draft a Bill for the disestablishment of the Church. A long and interesting letter came back in the middle of October, chiefly about estates for life and entail. All owners would have power to sell; but for technical details of a working scheme Harrison advised Morley to refer to Horace Davey. The principle was sound enough: "There is no revolution, or ransom, or expropriation in all this. It is falling back on old principles in the face of a growing Socialism, and Communism, and a land hunger in the democracy which threatens to swallow up English society." To Morley, Chamberlain's talk about ransom and natural rights was not, as we have seen, at all palatable. He always felt that the spirit of reform should be tempered and controlled by justice, and that the better distribution of property, wealth, and enjoyment should never wear the aspect of spoliation or confiscation. Besides these questions about the reform of the land laws, Morley consulted Harrison on the Statesman Series. After reporting his own progress with *Cromwell*, Harrison adds: "I am glad you are to do Mill. It is a pious duty;" and he promises to send Morley a few of Mill's letters for a book which unfortunately never passed from project to execution. But he

professed to be quite concerned that an active politician should be wasting time like this "when you have the care of all the caucuses on your shoulders and are in the position, say, of the Marquis of Anglesey at the last charge before Hougoumont, though I hope you will not lose your leg".

In the course of his peregrinations Morley found time to go to the assistance of his friend Courtney in Cornwall, who was fighting a hard battle in splendid isolation, with little sympathy for the Radical programme, but with much for the foreign policy of the Cobdenite tradition. A couple of entries in Mrs. Courtney's diary give us a glimpse of this, to be—little as the two friends could have imagined it—the last occasion for nearly fourteen years when they would stand together on a common political platform.

Saturday, Oct. 17.—Mr. John Morley joined us, and we had a beautiful stroll late in the afternoon along the shore and up round the hill. Much interesting talk. They discussed the negotiations going on between the Liberal chiefs. How far would Mr. Chamberlain give way to Mr. Gladstone—both on his programme and on the new Liberal Cabinet which we were all making so sure of? Mr. Morley anticipates great difficulty in forming a working government—almost impossible to avoid a split on one question or another. He is also, like Leonard, very gloomy about Ireland.

BODMIN, *Oct.* 19.—Crowded and excited meeting. Mr. Morley's speech very warm for Leonard, but not very eloquent on general politics. He himself thought it was his worst. There was much jingo opposition.

Next day Morley returned to London.

It is an odd illustration of the uncertainty of politics that these two friends should just now have fallen out over the programme, not of Gladstone, but of Chamberlain. A speech by Courtney on November 5 against free education brought him quite a sharp letter of complaint from Morley, who thought that he had let fly unnecessarily. "Surely you could have stated the

objections to free schools without making a direct attack on Chamberlain. . . . I have tried pretty hard to make an eirenicon between you and the Radicals, but I must give it up as a bad job."

After big meetings at various places, including Sunderland, whither he went to support Samuel Storey, a popular local Radical, he started his own campaign at Newcastle with a crowded and most enthusiastic meeting in the Town Hall on November 11, a week before the dissolution of Parliament. Dr. Spence Watson, who presided, opened the fight with the skill of a practised electioneerer. He dwelt upon the democratic fashion in which they had chosen John Morley for their candidate in 1883. Was he not the free and unfettered choice of the people, and had not that choice been abundantly confirmed ? After three sessions in Parliament he had never stood so high in their estimation, and in the estimation of the English people.

To attempt even a summary of the speeches delivered by Morley in the hot campaign of over a fortnight which followed would take us far beyond the limits of our space, and would also transgress his own saying that speeches in general, however good, are but food for a day, like the manna that fell from heaven. Take away the voice, the gesture, the occasion, the atmosphere, the excited emotions of the audience, the interruptions, the retorts, the local jests, hits, and repartees, which defy reproduction, and you take away almost everything. But as some plays, which should be seen to be fully enjoyed, can be read with pleasure by one's fireside for their merit as literature, so there is a class of orators, with Burke and Bright at their head, whose prepared speeches belong to political literature. They stir us to think, inspire us with ideals, and confirm our fainting public spirit. Of this noble band Morley was one. His first speech had been well studied ; and when, after nearly an hour and a half, the candidate sat down, his chairman declared it one of the most splendid he had ever listened to.

Morley began by admitting that the Parliament now ending had been a Parliament not only of great exploits, but of many disappointments. For the disappointments he found three reasons: first, that neither Government, Parliament, nor the public had made up their minds to face the facts of the Irish question; second, the opposition had been beyond all precedent mutinous, irresponsible, and unscrupulous.

> The third reason is, and I will not shrink from mentioning it, that the government and the parliament, with the sanction of the public, embarked upon foreign expeditions which have landed parliament, the government, and the public in a vast number of terrible complications.

Of Egypt and the Soudan he would speak at more length later.

> To-night I say we have learned a lesson, and one which all democratic governments here, or in France, or elsewhere, should lay to heart. Our government plunged into expeditions out of deference to jingo taunts, and then was afraid of prosecuting them with energy through fear of Radical censure. Depend upon it, whether Liberals or Tories are in power, there will always be the same temptation to plunge into an expedition in order to satisfy those who make their political living out of war, and then to fence about, to live from hand to mouth, and in the long run to augment the sacrifices and multiply the responsibilities which ought either not to have been incurred, or to have been fully faced and encountered.

It might have been supposed, from his association with Mr. Chamberlain and the Radical programme, that Chamberlain and Chamberlain's policy would have been the keynote of his first speech. Not so. He preferred to contrast Gladstone with Salisbury; the one a steady and ardent supporter of liberty at home and abroad, the other an equally steady and bitter opponent of both:

> There is hardly a country in Europe where the name of our leader is not revered and beloved as the partisan of

freedom. In Greece, in Italy, in the Balkan peninsula—wherever in his time peoples have sought to be emancipated, the name of Mr. Gladstone is honoured and revered. In his own country, which he has served for fifty years with such loyalty and such devotion, I do not believe, gentlemen, that at this, perhaps the crowning moment, we are going to forget all that he has done for good government, for liberty, for the elevation of his fellow-citizens, and for the promotion of every good cause in these islands.

From the two leaders he passed to the two policies. Mr. Gladstone, it may be remarked here, had in his address to the Midlothian electors only touched upon the question of Local Government in Ireland in a concluding paragraph, so vague and apparently so innocent of any startling change that little attention was paid to it; and few suspected that under its mild and rather obscure language there lurked the possibility of a sudden development which would alter the face of British politics for a generation, paralyse first the Liberal, then the Conservative party, and lead through broken pledges and bitter disappointments to murderous anarchy and a practical dissolution of the Union. At that moment the average politician thought that Mr. Chamberlain was far more advanced than Mr. Gladstone on Ireland as well as on everything else. But already, perhaps, Morley had some reason to think otherwise. On September 19 he had written to Chamberlain a few lines which show that there was the beginning of a disagreement. Mr. Chamberlain had proposed a national council for Ireland, but he had spoken adversely to Home Rule. "I don't suppose", wrote Morley to his friend and comrade, "that we differ an atom as to the next step to be taken, whatever it may be. But I, for my part, cannot refuse to consider the question of some sort of autonomy." There is on record a letter from Sir Thomas Dyke Acland to Mr. George Russell about a dinner party with Mr. Gladstone at Whitehall Place in August 1885. The letter was given to me for publication

by Mr. George Russell after Mr. Gladstone's death. Sir Thomas was rather anxious about politics :

"Chamberlain's programme was out. W. E. G. said before dinner I need not trouble about it. Ireland was the main question, and C.'s views were not advanced on that. . . . Two important members of his late government were present. . . . They debated the question of the Irish demand for Home Government." On this occasion Mr. Gladstone maintained that Ireland must have a parliament of its own as the only means of satisfying the Irish people, and "afterwards, when we joined the ladies he threw himself on the sofa, beckoned to me and said : 'Acland, we are come to the break-up of the Liberal party' ".

We may guess that Morley had some private knowledge of Gladstone's approach to Home Rule. At any rate he dotted the *i*'s of his leader's references to Ireland :

Some of my friends have been surprised that I should have placed Ireland in the forefront of the questions touched on in my Address. But I am glad to think I only did by anticipation what our leader within the last three days has done in fulfilment. The question of Ireland may not come first in order of time ; but it is first in order of importance, and importunity, and I rejoice that Mr. Gladstone with his usual unfailing penetration and sagacity has made the reconstruction of government in Ireland the topic of his first speech and the subject of his first appeal.

Then he went on to argue very earnestly that a new system must be found in substitute for Dublin castle. When, as a result of extended suffrage, the Irish Nationalists became, as they were sure to become, much more numerous in the House of Commons, it would be very difficult for a democratic chamber to shut its ears to the popular voice and the national voice of Ireland. Moreover, until Irish representatives were either removed from the British Parliament or in some other way satisfied, political progress in Great Britain would be blocked ; it would be impossible to carry on the work of parliamentary government. Mr. Gladstone had said

that Ireland should have everything in the way of local self-government consistent with the unity of the Empire and with the authority of Parliament in that connection. That was Mr. Gladstone's principle, and Morley believed (too confidently, as it turned out) that it would be accepted by the bulk, even the whole, of his party in the new Parliament :

> Pray believe me, as one who has studied, read, thought, written, and spoken about the Irish question for twenty years ; pray believe me, that it will be a fatal mistake if we approach this tremendous question hampered by foregone conclusions, gagged and muzzled by angry vows that we will never do this and that we will never do that. All the mischief in Ireland has been done, because we have gone in for peddling, niggardly, grudging reforms.

By this time the audience was becoming impatient. The candidate saw it, but insisted on adding one more sentence, by which he at last succeeded—and at that time it was a big success—in rousing them to real enthusiasm :

> I say that for the sake of order in Ireland, for the sake of the strength and integrity of parties in England, for the sake of the dignity and efficiency of the British parliament, we are bound to attempt bold remedies for a deep disease ; and I for one have faith in the courage and the genius of Mr. Gladstone. (*Loud cheers.*) I believe that, if you will support him, we shall yet still see the star of Irish contentment rising out of the sunset of Midlothian. (*Great cheering.*)

The next issue to which he turned was that of fair trade. At the previous election " somebody asked me if I was for fair trade, and I remember saying I did not think it a very good question to put to the man who wrote the Life of Richard Cobden ". Being on the banks of the Tyne, and asking himself about depressed industries, he thought perhaps the most depressed was that of building and owning ships. But the Tory party

proposed as a remedy for depression retaliatory duties upon foreign imports. That surely must have the effect of diminishing imports, of reducing the exchange of commodities, and the quantity of goods that ships would have to carry. A very peculiar way of helping ship-building and ship-owning! Imported articles had to be paid for by exported articles, not, as some imagined, by exports of gold. Fair trade, as it was called, could only reduce their trade and their manufactures. Mr. Chamberlain was fighting out the subject in Birmingham, and was quoting from the experience of the United States, where they had protection up to the hilt. "Any one who was at Birmingham last night might have heard my friend, Mr. Chamberlain (*loud and prolonged cheers*), tell his constituents that the number of men out of employment, the number of works standing idle in the United States, is something appalling." The Secretary of the American Treasury himself had admitted that their problem was "How shall the country be relieved from the plethora of manufactured goods?"

From free trade he passed to free education, and handled with much vigour all the arguments against it, adding: "Those who accuse us of introducing flat socialism are talking flat nonsense." It was absurd to say that the poor would be pauperised or demoralised if their children were provided with good free schooling. "I was lucky enough", he said, "to get a scholarship at Oxford, bequeathed to my college by an old bishop of Durham in some far-off century, whose pious benefactions live on like a beacon light through the dark and dim ages. Well, I do not value knowledge less, nor cherish books less, because I got the greater part of my education at the University of Oxford for nothing." He was ashamed to think that men who had so profited should grudge a good education to the children of the poor. "Those men who talk to us of socialism, and say we are destroying the resources of the country, will spend five, ten, or twenty millions in Bechuanaland or on the banks

of the Nile and say that the national honour demands it." Did not national honour demand that the opportunities of knowledge should be given to all, that capital should be applied not merely to land and industry but to brains. They talked of German competition. The secret of German competition was Germany's system of graduated schools and technical education.

And now he came to his conclusion, glancing (though without naming Cowen) at the objections and criticisms levelled at the Liberal candidate by Cowen's paper, the *Newcastle Chronicle*. It had been said, when he first stood, that he was a slave of the caucus and would be at Westminster only a party hack regulating his paces by the crack of the party whip. He asked whether that prediction had not been falsified. Yet he valued party as a great instrument for good. It was a union of men in common council for systematic action :

> You will be told, perhaps, that I have followed expediency and declared myself an opportunist. So I have. But I do not define opportunism as the sacrificing of principle to expediency. That is not my opportunism. Mine has regard to times and seasons. You must take questions as they come, and if necessary one question at once. Nor do I deny that politics are a department of morals. I think they are, but they are also a department of common sense.

A few days before the polling the word went forth that, in spite of all Morley had done for Ireland, the Irish Catholics in Newcastle had been instructed to divide their votes between Cowen and Hamond. It was a hard blow, and the mischief done by an unprincipled vote, cast in most of the northern constituencies for a party which had been denouncing Irish Nationalists as foul fiends and hateful rebels, though it seemed to be justified by tactics, in fact recoiled a little later on the Home Rule cause.

Polling day at Newcastle fell on Saturday, November 28. On Monday, at nine o'clock, the sheriff of

Newcastle broke the seals of the ballot boxes, which had been in custody over Sunday at the Council Chamber; and forty enumerators, to quote a local chronicler, set to work to clear up the mystery of 'perhaps the most unique contest in this general election'. Morley and Hamond were in the Town Hall while the counting went on; but Cowen, unable to bear the excitement, was represented by his son. Fifteen thousand people congregated in the square, and the crowds were not quite so peaceable as at the bye-election of 1883. There was a good deal of horse-play, and as much betting as if it had been a race or a football match. Morley's supporters overestimated his polling strength. Ten to one was freely offered against Cowen being head of the poll, and five to four against his being in at all. The Radical stalwarts must have lost a good deal of money. At half-past two, when the poll was declared, the figures were—Cowen, 10,489; Morley, 10,129; Hamond, 9500. But an analysis of the votes showed without a doubt which of the two members who called themselves Radicals represented the Liberals and Radicals of Newcastle. Over 7000 electors plumped for Morley; less than 3000 split between Cowen and Morley; nearly 5000 split between Cowen and Hamond; and only 306 split between Morley and Hamond.

Addressing the electors after the polls, Morley pointed to the splits between Cowen and Hamond as a proof of the strong combination that had been arrayed against them. In face of that, "we may fairly say that we have achieved a tremendous victory for the Liberal party and for the Liberal Association". Dr. Spence Watson said that the figures disclosed a Liberal majority of more than 4000 for Morley over Cowen. Cowen, speaking to a crowd in front of the *Chronicle* office, expressed his surprise at the result; for he had entered a fierce contest without any of the ordinary machinery of an election. Cowen's plumpers, 2814, were largely Irishmen; for the green bills appealing to the Irish vote, after first advising

them to split between Hamond and Cowen, had come out in a second edition as follows :

> To my Irish Fellow-Countrymen—After deep consultation with Mr. Parnell and the Executive I have come to the conclusion that we should have no disunion among the Irishmen of Newcastle. I wish therefore to withdraw the Manifesto bearing my signature. I hope my fellow-countrymen will plump for Mr. Cowen.
>
> (Signed) Bernard McAnulty.

It should be remembered, in fairness to the Irishmen, that Cowen had been an ardent supporter of Parnell and of Irish Home Rule for many years, and a consistent opponent of the policy of coercion.

In those days a General Election lasted for nearly a month, beginning with the boroughs and ending with the counties. In London and Lancashire the Conservatives won a good many seats, and when the boroughs had voted it looked as if the Liberal party would be in a minority. But the counties came to the rescue. Voting for the first time, the agricultural labourer showed his gratitude for the franchise, and a lively sense of favours to come under the Radical programme. In some of the eastern counties, farm hands who had never heard of Mr. Gladstone knew all about Jesse Collings and his offer of ' three acres and a cow '. At some of the polling booths, it was said, men turned up with halters to lead back the cow. Unfortunately, as Chamberlain put it, they had no cow for the towns. When all was over, the Liberal party had lost on balance about 25 seats in Great Britain and Ireland (14 in Ireland), while Parnell's party rose to 86. Tories and Parnellites combined just balanced the Liberals. Ulster, for the first and last time in its political history, elected a majority of Nationalists over Tories and Orangemen—18 to 17. If the English counties had gone as the boroughs did, the strategy and calculations of Mr. Parnell would have been successful. His party would have held the balance, and he could have given a

working majority either to the Conservative Government or to the Liberal opposition. But, as things stood, he was no longer of any use to the Conservatives, or they to him. Only if the Liberal party was convertible to Home Rule could a Home Rule Bill be carried through the House of Commons. Unluckily his own tactics had impelled many of the new Liberal M.P.'s to denounce Home Rule at the elections; and they were too deeply committed to turn round at a moment's notice.

There is no need to enlarge on the complicated transactions which followed. They have been brilliantly recounted at full length by Morley himself in his famous *Life of Gladstone*. When he was writing it, and often afterwards, I raised the question, one of the most difficult in our political history, whether Mr. Gladstone's heroic effort to solve the problem of Irish government was well judged and well timed. Only a man of Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary physique, prestige, courage, versatility, vigour, and imperious self-confidence would have embarked on an enterprise so difficult and so daring at seventy-six—more than ten years after his first retirement from politics. Only an old man in a hurry, so Lord Randolph Churchill once said with characteristic irreverence, would have attempted to bring about so complete a reversal of public and party policy so swiftly and so suddenly. In politics, Englishmen and Scots are a stubborn and slow-moving race. Only the extraordinary personal ascendancy, political genius, and well-tried capacity of the Liberal leader could have reconciled a majority of his party to a close alliance with Parnell, who—as they had been told not so very long before by Gladstone himself—had been marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire. Nor could the average Liberal, if he were a keen politician, easily forget and forgive the unscrupulous tactics by which the Irish Catholic vote in Great Britain had been transferred almost *en bloc* to the Tories at the recent elections. If Ireland had been governed without coercion in accordance

with Morley's precepts from 1880 to 1885, if Gladstone's remedial measures had looked in the direction of Irish self-government instead of being confined to Church and land, if Parnell had instructed the Irish Catholics in England and Scotland to vote for the candidate whose views were most favourable to Home Rule, then indeed the situation when the new Parliament met in January would have been as promising as it was unpromising. Nor can it be forgotten that the three men who stood next to Mr. Gladstone in popularity with the Liberal electors of Great Britain were Chamberlain, Hartington, and Bright. If they could not be reconciled to the new departure, success was hardly to be anticipated, and the breaking up of the Liberal party was unjustifiable. Morley never quite admitted to me that Mr. Gladstone's action, which at the time he had most heartily endorsed, was mistaken; but he felt on looking back that Chamberlain at any rate had been badly handled. All through that year, and right up to the General Election, Chamberlain's popularity with the working classes (though not with the middle classes) had rivalled Gladstone's. His Radical programme had attracted to the Liberal flag socialistic sentiment in the towns, and his campaign with Jesse Collings in the rural districts had awakened a new craving in the agricultural labourer for more independence and more opportunity. Even Harcourt had attached himself to Chamberlain. It would have been natural and reasonable after the election to give the Birmingham leader a great position in the Cabinet, if a new Liberal Administration was to be formed. Had Chamberlain been consulted and entrusted with the conduct of an Allotments Bill as the first measure of the new Government, it is likely enough that by the end of the year a Home Rule Bill might have been concerted with the Irish which Chamberlain and the whole Radical wing would have helped to carry through the Commons. As I ventured to write a year after Mr. Gladstone's death, many Liberals, and good Liberals

too, lacked the magnanimity which in Mr. Gladstone's case could forget in a moment all that the party had suffered at the hands of Parnell. A real and friendly alliance between English Liberalism and Irish Nationalism could not be extemporised in a month. The unscrupulous strategy of Parnell in the autumn of 1885 made a poor overture to the symphony of goodwill and friendship which Gladstone sought to conduct between February and June. Even if the *History of an Idea* rescues Gladstone as Home Ruler from the charge of intellectual precipitancy, it does not excuse his neglect of the laws of political psychology, or of those elementary prejudices and passions which control and govern political combinations.

Soon after the election Spence Watson came up to London, and suggested that the constituency required a course of political instruction. On December 14 Morley wrote to him :

I should really like to shape with you that Educational course on politics of which you spoke. It is of sovereign importance, both for small ends and great, temporary and permanent. Ought we to organize a course of political lectures for Newcastle alone, or ought we, in concert with a few of the right men, to extend operations over the whole of Northumberland and Durham ? Ought we to form that bright corner of England into a Liberal Union, for education and for organization ? Here is a host of new members and a bigger host of new voters—all like sheep in the wilderness. Their Liberalism is the very best, soundest, and manliest in all England. Shall we take it in hand, and take the lead of it ?

Then he goes on :

There are many distractions in the party—among the Olympians—of which it is not well to write. I am taking a very strong line and straight—and I shall stick to it, that the party must hold together, that Gladstone and nobody else is our chief, and that I for one will make no pretence of supporting the Tories in power.

This was the exact opposite of Chamberlain's tactics. He would have left Lord Salisbury in office to settle accounts with Parnell, predicting that before long Parnell would come to the Liberals in a conciliatory mood. Harcourt took much the same line. The Tories, he said, should be left to stew in Parnellite juice.

No narrative of events can hope to reproduce successfully the sensational rapidity with which the new drama unfolded itself after the elections were concluded. At the beginning of December Morley had visited Chamberlain at Highbury and their differences on Ireland "came into full light". Chamberlain saw that Morley was determined to force the pace and told him that it would be in opposition to his oldest political friend. It was likely to be a case of Fox and Burke over again. His forebodings soon proved correct. On December 17 there appeared in the *Leeds Mercury* the so-called Hawarden kite, an anonymous paragraph stating on good authority (a conversation with Mr. Herbert Gladstone) that Mr. Gladstone was prepared to deal in a liberal spirit with the demand for Home Rule. Two days earlier the newly elected member for Newcastle had written to his chairman:

It may be most important for me to have an opportunity of saying a few public words between now and this day week: *e.g.* Monday. I can easily make the said opportunity in London. On the other hand, it might be better to say the words to our 500 in Newcastle. What do you think? The points would be: 1. The Irish elections change the situation. 2. The said situation ought to be faced and dealt with. 3. Ld. S. has many advantages, no doubt, for facing it. 4. If he does not, Mr. G. will probably wish to do so. (He is not only ready, but anxious.) 5. If he is, we northern radicals mean to support him tooth and nail — saving supremacy and unity. Much dirty intriguing is going on. I won't be a party to snubbing the Old Man.

On December 17 he wrote again:

I think you will wish me at Jericho. But the times are

ticklish—and one must save one's country. I hope and trust that if for any reason you think it unwise to have the 500 on Monday you will say so. Silence can seldom do any harm to one's self or anybody else. Speech may. In any case, nothing is easier for me than to say what I have to say in London. The *occasion*—whether here or in Newcastle—is unimportant, but I am anxious not to be associated with views and a line which are odious in respect of Mr. Gladstone.

On December 21 he did speak at Newcastle, telling his constituents that they must try to view the Home Rule question calmly and steadily, though it would stir passions and might destroy a great party. A letter to Spence Watson after his return to London shows us that he was well satisfied with his own choice:

Thank you for your letter. I am well aware of the first promptings of the natural man as to the Irish. But our friends will learn. They will see the Tories themselves driven to deal with the matter. My own (private) forecast is that Gladstone will try and will fail, just as Canning did with Catholic emancipation. Then Salisbury will carry it, just as Wellington and Peel carried Catholic Emancipation. Gladstone will be avenged, but he will most likely be dead, and I don't fancy the dead much prize vengeance. Meanwhile, I will be very careful. Probably the question will cause my eclipse or extinction. But it shall not be my fault. I look back on my Monday's speech with a satisfaction that is very rare with me. It was well loaded with solid reflections, and I am glad to see that it has been felt. All the papers in the country seem to have had articles on it, and not one (Liberal) has found fault with it. The *Scotsman* is warmest of all. It is most important that I should from time to time be kept advised of *your* frame of mind in the matter.

At the same time he wrote to Chamberlain:

You will, I fear, like my speech less than I liked yours. But it was necessary to my mental peace, and it has been singularly respectfully received, considering the odium which attaches to any scent or suspicion of Home Rule.

He had seen one of the Irish politicians and had learned that there was no chance of a religious and education compromise between Tories and Parnellites; for the Parnellites were all thinking of one thing and one thing only—Home Rule.

Chamberlain's reply, quoted in the *Recollections*, showed plainly how fast the rift was widening between the two leading Radicals. He could not blind himself to the fact that " on the most important issue which has arisen since you were in parliament, we are working against each other, and not as allies ".

Here we may add passages from two letters written by Morley to his sister at the beginning and end of this month :

December 2.—Since returning yesterday I have written between 30 and 40 letters; have read Stephen's *Life of Fawcett*. . . . My cough has abated, and my voice has recovered some of its natural tone. When I look back on it all, I feel that I must be a Hercules.

. . . The baffled trickster, JOE, knows that he is done. He says he won't ever stand again. But he will, all the same, when the time comes.

The letter ends, " Courtney is safe "; the only reference to the fate of his friends at the elections.

December 24.—I went to Newcastle on Monday and reached home again last night. They were all very hearty and kind and glad to see me. I saw all my cronies; stayed one night at the Stephens, and was much pressed and oppressed by viands; had tea at the Havelocks, and gave myself indigestion with girdle-cake; and so forth, and so forth. We had a good meeting of the Five Hundred, and I made them a speech which is being a great deal talked of all over the country. Whether it will do any good or not, I don't know. Old John Bull is very stubborn, and he does not love his Irish brethren. Well, it's no interest to me to be in public life, unless I can say what I think, and I'm not devoid of political pluck.

I fancy the Tories will pretty soon be put out. But

heaven knows who will come in. Gladstone will find it hard to form a working government. Still he's a bit of a fox, and I daresay he'll find his way back to Downing St. before he is done.

On December 28 he answered Chamberlain in a longish letter which will be found in the *Recollections*, pp. 206-7. It expresses amazement at Chamberlain's feeling that "for a long time" they had been "drifting apart". He thought they had never worked more cordially together than during the last four months, and begged his friend not to be too exacting. All the propositions he had laid down about Ireland were necessary to make a case for Chamberlain's own project of a National Council:

> I submit that you should not be in such a hurry to sever old political connections. As you know, I have no sort of ambition to be an admiral of the fleet. But I'll be hanged if I'll be powder monkey. I have thought, read, written about Ireland all my life. Here comes a crisis. Am I to be debarred from saying what I think—saying it, mind you, as I did at Newcastle, in particularly careful, sober, well-weighed words?

He could not and would not stand by while the Tories and Whigs said what they liked. "We may part company over Irish affairs before they are done. The journey will be trying. But it's childish for men like you and me to quarrel at the first jolt."

At this time he was distracted by house-hunting as well as by politics; but on January 1 he wrote again to Chamberlain about their public friendship and the vital question that might justify or compel severance. He could not believe that Chamberlain's National Council would long remain content with functions so narrow, and sent him a criticism of the scheme, adding: "I have some ideas, but they will keep until we meet. I am for no plan of Thorough, unless it involves the disappearance of the Irish members from our House. If that be not

possible, I would almost try to muddle and potter on." They met and dined on January 5 " with much frank but perfectly pleasant talk ". Two days later Morley spoke at a big meeting in Chelmsford and " shot his bolt ", as he put it, " for the removal of the Irish members from Westminster ". A letter to his sister describes an unpleasant experience on this occasion.

" You would have been unhappy if you could have known of my doings on Thursday last at Chelmsford. First, it was a mere chance that I was not in the railway accident ; happily I went down by the train twenty minutes earlier. But Providence paid me out. Intending to return that night, I passed two hours in a fog on the platform. Then I made up my mind that the accident had blocked the line, and that no train would start. So at 11.30 two of us went to the hotel. No beds ! But we had a good fire in a sitting room, and I had a sofa, while my brother M.P. snored in an arm-chair. The night was so cold that it needed all our coats, mufflers, rugs, etc., to keep us going, and we cherished the fire earnestly, I can tell you. I bore it all in a perfectly philosophic spirit. The next morning we had some coffee at 7, trudged through snow and wind to the station, and finally reached London at 9.20, thankful that things were no worse.

" My speech ", he went on, " has made a lively clatter in the newspapers—but I am for the most part civilly treated. The political prospect is very bad—and particularly bad for us Liberals. But one gets pretty hardened, and it would not break my heart to be out of it all. The life is not an easy one, nor very satisfactory. You do not see the result of your activity and self-denial, tho' one may hope that some good result does come after all.

" Chamberlain and I went to the French play on Tuesday, after a snug meal at the Athenæum. We are going again on Wednesday. So you need not believe the stories of the London correspondents that we have quarrelled."

The Morleys had decided some time before this that Putney was too far from the House of Commons. After a long and doleful search they pitched upon a house in Elm Park Gardens, where they were to remain for

nearly twenty years. Here, in a letter to Grace, is a list of its attractions:

The scene of our future glories is to be at Elm Park Gardens—a great pack of dwellings in S. Kensington, about six minutes' walk from Gloucester Road station, and on the Fulham Road, almost close to the Brompton hospital. There is an immense large garden belonging to all the houses collectively, and the rooms are wonderfully light and bright. The house has never been inhabited, and we have the privilege of choosing our own papers, paint, tiles, etc., etc.—which we like very much. Also we are well pleased to go into a place which has not the heart-sickening smell of old London houses. The servants will have very fair quarters indeed—and on the whole, considering the awful dog-holes of London, we are more than satisfied. The rent is more than I like, but we shall cut down at some other end. It will be a vast deal cheaper than our dear B. L. here. We shall migrate as soon as the painters will let us—probably in about a month's time. It is very handsome and mighty genteel, and you will not be at all ashamed to come to see us.

On January 13 the *Recollections* record another dinner with Chamberlain, an earnest and painful talk, but made easier by the sincere desire of both to preserve good feeling. Jesse Collings, Chamberlain's faithful henchman, was there. They were now on the eve of the meeting of Parliament. Lord Salisbury had thrown over Lord Carnarvon, and with him the policy of conciliating Ireland which had played its part before and during the election. Chamberlain's own policy, announced at Birmingham on December 17, had been to let the Government remain in office for a time and "to drink to the dregs the cup of humiliation which they had filled for themselves". Now, finding this impracticable, he decided to have the credit of turning them out by an amendment to the Queen's speech moved by Jesse Collings, regretting that the Government had not proposed measures for providing agricultural labourers with allotments. This amendment, supported by Glad-

stone and Chamberlain, was opposed by Hartington and Goschen, and was carried at one A.M. on the morning of January 27 by a majority of 79—257 Liberals and Radicals and 74 Irish Nationalists, against 234 Conservatives and 18 Whigs, showing (at first sight) that the Whig defections would not have mattered much had it been possible to reconcile the Radical Programme of Chamberlain with the Irish Policy of Parnell. But over 50 Liberals were absent, most of them deliberately abstaining—a bad omen for the stability of the Government which it was now Mr. Gladstone's task to form.

This was to be the end of Morley's career as a journalist, man of letters, and private member of Parliament; and here we may leave him, not without regret that he was giving up so much to a barren controversy. Had he foreseen the extent of the Irish sands which he would have to plough in the next ten years he might have hesitated. But when the call came he accepted it with alacrity and exultation. Nor did he ever regret the choice. The air of Olympus agreed with him. He enjoyed it, and he enjoyed also the pomps and ceremonies and privileges of high office. How far responsibility changed his character and opinions is a question which I hope some day to answer.

INDEX

Abram, G. P., i. 133
Abram, W., i. 134, 153
Acton, Lord, i. 48, 306
Afghan boundary, ii. 224
Afghan War, ii. 64-5
Agnosticism, i. 67
Alabama claims, i. 120, 214, 266
Alexandria, bombardment of, ii. 116, 191
Allotments, ii. 270
Alpine Club, i. 228
Alsace-Lorraine, i. 168-73, 175
American civil wars, i. 104, 189
American colonies, i. 104
American Revolution, i. 104-5
Anonymity in journalism, i. 58-9, 79, 234
Anti-Corn Law Leagues, i. 8, 9
Aphorisms, i. 95
Arabi Pasha, ii. 110, 115, 190-92
Aristotelian, Morley an, i. 20
Armaments, cost of, ii. 62, 240
Arnold, Frederick, i. 22, 34
Arnold, Matthew, i. 28, 246; ii. 12, 22, 82
Ashantee War, i. 293
Atheism, i. 246-58
Athenæum Club, ii. 58
Atlantic Monthly, i. 226
Austin, Charles, ii. 119
Austin, Richard, i. 42

Bagehot, Walter, i. 46, 69, 85; ii. 129
Ballot, the, Morley favours, i. 151-3
Bar, the, as a profession, i. 35
Bartlett, Ashmead, ii. 160, 195
Beale, James, ii. 15
Beesly, E. S., i. 166, 174-5, 191-2, 281-3
Bentham, Jeremy, i. 31, 32, 53, 75, 116
Birmingham, ii. 2, 3
Birmingham Caucus, ii. 21, 47
Birmingham School of Radicals, i. 67
Bismarck, i. 175, 177, 179, 184, 189, 280, 286, 297; ii. 53
Blackburn, i. 4-12, 127, 148-54, 247; ii. 50
Blackheath, J. S. Mill at, i. 52-3
Blakey Moor, i. 151, 152
Blanc, Louis, i. 197
Boers, ii. 70, 71, 103-4
Bolingbroke, i. 91
Bosnia, ii. 25-7
Bournemouth, i. 241, 243
Bowdler, Thomas, i. 185
Boycott, ii. 99
Brandt, F., i. 13
Brett, Justice, i. 230-32
Bridges, J. H., i. 68; ii. 55
Bright, John, i. 104, 138, 154-5, 217 *n.*, 268; ii. 3, 34, 39, 64, 100, 111, 117, 121
Brighton, i. 219; ii. 4, 8, 57
Bryce, James (Viscount), i. 191; ii. 275-6
Buckle's *History of Civilisation*, i. 27
Bulgarian atrocities, ii. 26
Bulgarians, i. 183
Burke, Edmund, i. 17, 36; Morley's first study of, 88 *sqq.*; ii. 7, 19, 20, 73, 82-4
Burt, Thomas, ii. 153
Byron, ii. 31
Byzantine Empire, ii. 60-61

Cade, Jack, ii. 251
Cairnes, J. E., i. 170-71, 214; ii. 129
Calvinism, ii. 128
Canals, objections to, i. 51
Carlyle, Thomas, i. 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 41, 71, 78, 209, 210, 226-7; ii. 102, 181
Carnarvon, Lord, i. 86; ii. 48, 227, 246

Carteret, ii. 64
Castlereagh, i. 39
Cavagnari, Sir Louis, ii. 72, 85, 213
Cecil, Lord Robert (Marquis of Salisbury), i. 45 ; ii. 36, 209, 224, 227, 254, 277
Cetewayo, ii. 66, 67
Chamberlain, Joseph, i. 12, 276, 279 *sqq.*, 296 ; ii. 5, 16, 46-7, 52-3, 55, 57, 81, 100, 106, 123-4, 131, 172 ; visits Newcastle, 183 *sqq.*, 194, 199, 201, 209 *sqq.*, 227 *sqq.*, 248 *sqq.*, 262, 263, 265, 270, 272 *sqq.*
Chamberlain, Richard, ii. 224
Chapman, Edward, i. 43, 63, 65 *n.*, 84 ; ii. 55
Charles I., i. 23
Chartists, i. 6, 8
Cheltenham College, i. 12-14
Christ, i. 222
Church of England, i. 96, 273 *sqq.*
rates, i. 96
Churchill, Lord Randolph, ii. 98, 115, 185 *sqq.*, 196, 225, 227-8, 231
Clemenceau, ii. 220
Clifford, W. K., ii. 129-30
Closure, ii. 159-60
Clough, Arthur Hugh, i. 26, 27
Cobden, Richard, i. 154-5 ; ii. 41, 106
Cobden, Life of Richard, ii. 86, 110-113, 154, 175, 189
Cobdenism, ii. 189
Coercion, ii. 98 *sqq.*, 120 *sqq.*, 157-9
Colenso, Bishop, ii. 71
Collings, Jesse, ii. 2, 268, 270, 277
Commune, Russian, ii. 42
Communism, French, i. 176 *sqq.*, 181 *sqq.*
Communist refugees, i. 209
Compromise, i. 67, 301, 304 ; ii. 1 *n.*
Comte, Auguste, i. 41, 51, 72-4, 79, 83, 94, 190, 199, 200, 252, 324-5 ; ii. 15
Comtism, i. 186-7, 191 *sqq.*
Condorcet, i. 71, 77, 161, 259
Congreve, Richard, i. 21, 78, 192, 290 ; ii. 30
Conscription, i. 170-75, 178 *sqq.*
Consistency (in politics), i. 135 ; ii. 254-5
Constantinople, ii. 44
Cook, John Douglas, i. 38, 45, 46
Copsham Common, ii. 14
Corday, Charlotte, i. 227
Corn Laws, i. 8
Cotter Morison, J. *See* Morison
Courtney, Lady, ii. 218
Courtney, Leonard, ii. 20-22, 80, 206-7, 257, 259
Cowen, Joseph, ii. 49, 55, 139 *sqq.*, 155-6, 163-4, 168-9, 192, 195-196, 214, 256-7, 267-8
Cromer, Lord, ii. 191
Cromwell, Oliver, i. 4, 23
Crosskey, H. W., i. 267 *n.* ; ii. 2, 9, 52
Cruelty to animals, i. 75-6, 183

Daily News, the, i. 156-7
Dale, R. W., i. 267 *n.* ; ii. 2
Dalhousie, Lord, ii. 229
Darwin, i. 42, 69, 73, 180, 183, 187, 224, 316 ; ii. 46, 89
Dawson, George, ii. 2
Death, mystery of, i. 73 ; ii. 128
Delane, i. 84
Derby, Lord, ii. 40, 48-9
Diderot, Morley's, ii. 4, 58-9
Dilke, Ashton, ii. 151-2
Dilke, Sir Charles, i. 217, 267 ; ii. 142, 247
Dillon, John, ii. 108
Diplomacy, ii. 39-41, 189
Disendowment, ii. 6
Disestablishment, i. 228-9 ; ii. 1 *sqq.*, 52, 237-9, 257
Disraeli, i. 36, 217, 268 ; ii. 18-20, 24-7, 34 *sqq.*, 63 *sqq.*, 106, 113
Dissent, i. 271 *sqq.*
Dixon, George, ii. 2
Donkin, Priscilla (mother), i. 7, 42
Durham, Lord, ii. 183, 188

Edinburgh Review, i. 84, 85
Education Bill of 1870, i. 266 *sqq.*
Education, free, i. 275-6 ; ii. 238, 241
national, Morley's book on, i. 270 *sqq.*
secular, i. 228-9, 267 *sqq.*
Egypt, ii. 37, 114 *sqq.*, 160, 190 *sqq.*, 200
Election, General (of 1868), i. 139 *sqq.* ; (of 1885), ii. 247, 268
Eliot, George, i. 27, 41, 55-8, 220, 221, 305, 324-5 ; ii. 56, 59, 181
Emerson, R. W., i. 21, 31, 120 ; ii. 180
Empiricism, i. 308 *sqq.*
English Men of Letters Series, ii. 56
English Statesmen Series, ii. 202
Equality of opportunity, i. 109
Ethics, theory of, i. 74-6

Evolution, i. 73, 289, 316
Expansion of England, ii. 180-81

Fair Trade, ii. 106, 109, 185-7, 264-5
Fawcett, Henry, i. 53, 277 ; ii. 8, 205 ; life of, 274
Fenianism, i. 128
Ferry, Jules, ii. 77
Fielden, Joseph, i. 148
Finlay, George, ii. 60
Florence, ii. 31-2
Forster, W. E., i. 267, 299 ; ii. 99, 102-3, 120 *sqq.*, 179
Fortnightly Review, i. 63 *sqq.* ; politics of, 67 ; circulation of, 288 ; ii. 114, 129-33
Fowler, Thomas, i. 15, 16, 20 ; ii. 54
Fox, Charles James, ii. 107
Fox-hunting, i. 66
Franchise, County, ii. 193, 198, 201 *sqq.*
Fraternity, i. 109, 110
Free-lance journalism, i. 37
Free speech, ii. 160
Free Trade, ii. 106-7. *See* Protection
Freeman, Edward, i. 47, 66 ; ii. 33
French Revolution, i. 106 *sqq.*
Frere, Sir Bartle, ii. 65 *sqq.*, 98
Froude, J. A., i. 80-83 ; ii. 54, 74

Gambetta, i. 236, 292 ; ii. 5
Garibaldi, ii. 140
Garrison, W. Lloyd, ii. 141
Gasparin, Agenor de, i. 171
Gas stokers, i. 230-32
Genesis, i. 73
Geneva, i. 256, 261
George the Third, i. 91
Germany, i. 298
Gladstone, W. E., i. 49, 138 *sqq.*, 147, 165, 233, 266 ; ii. 7, 11, 25, 26, 28-9, 46 *sqq.*, 59-60, 91-2, 146 *sqq.*, 193, 197, 261 *sqq.*
Godkin, E. L., i. 120
Gooch, G. P., 306
Gordon, General, ii. 190 ; death of, 212 *sqq.*
Goschen, G. J., ii. 59, 251-3
Gosse, Sir E., i. 68 *n.*
Governed, right of, i. 130
Government, duty of, i. 130
Granville, Lord, i. 163-5
Greece, ii. 61, 99
Green, T. H., i. 24, 26
Greenwood, Frederick, i. 66 ; ii. 91
Greg, W. R., i. 66, 251 ; ii. 180
Grote, George, i. 53
Guillotine, Dr., i. 225-7

Hammond, J. L., i. 5, 36
Harcourt, Sir William, i. 46 ; ii. 17, 18, 217-19
Hardman, William, i. 43
Hardy, H. H., i. 12
Hargreaves, James, i. 5
Harrison, Frederic, i. 69, 71, 72, 161-2, 166, 176 *sqq.* ; writes the *Republic*, 212 *sqq.* ; ii. 3 *sqq.*, 28 *sqq.*, 204-5, 258
Hartington, Lord, i. 269 ; ii. 14, 18, 19, 253
Hatfield, i. 186-8
Hawarden Kite, ii. 272
History, science of, i. 79 *sqq.*
Hobbs, i. 263, 265
Hobson, J. A., i. 155
Hog's Back, i. 193-4
Holbach, ii. 47
Home Rule, i. 101, 213 ; ii. 95, 143, 273 *sqq.*
Hoole, William, i. 9-11
Hoole's Academy, i. 9-11
Hornby, W. H., i. 148
Houghton, Lord, i. 70, 246, 249, ii. 13
Housing problem, ii. 161
Hugo, Victor, i. 53-5 ; ii. 77
Humanity, religion of, i. 324
Hume, Joseph, i. 39, 40
Hutton, R., i. 216, 246, 253
Huxley, T. H., i. 72-4 ; ii. 22, 46

Iddesleigh, Lord. *See* Northcote
Imperial Federation, ii. 181
Imperialism, ii. 61-2, 64, 68, 146, 180-81, 188-90, 200, 210
Imperium et Libertas, ii. 72
Income tax, ii. 25
India, government of, i. 102-3
Indian frontier, ii. 221, 224
Ireland, Church of, i. 132, 136-41, 150
  education in, i. 215, 216 ; ii. 107
  government of, ii. 241 *sqq.*
  protection in, ii. 249
Irish, in America, i. 120-23, 129
  in Newcastle, ii. 162, 266-8
Irish character, i. 129
  grievances, i. 100, 131-2, 135
  history, i. 98, 99
  land, i. 132 ; ii. 98 *sqq.*, 108
  Nationalism, ii. 263-4
Irving, Henry, ii. 102

Jingoism, ii. 38, 43, 44, 49-50
Joachim, ii. 76
Joan of Arc, i. 77
Jones, Ernest, i. 154
Journalism, i. 33 *sqq.*
Journalists, influential English, i. 36
Jowett, B., ii. 11, 12

Khartoum, ii. 190 *sqq.*
Kingussie, ii. 108-9

Lafitte, Pierre, i. 72, 206, 208, 224, 289 *sqq.*; ii. 30
Lancashire Radicalism, i. 134
Land League, Irish, ii. 110
Land Reform, ii. 234-5, 258
Lansdowne, Marquis of, ii. 72
Laski, H., i. 47
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, ii. 190-92
Leader, the, i. 41
Lecky, W. E. H., i. 12, 74-6
Leeds, Liberal Conference at, ii. 173-5
Leeds Mercury, i. 35
Lewes, George Henry, i. 41, 64, 65, 295
Liberal Imperialists, ii. 200
Liberation Society, ii. 1, 2, 6, 9, 10
Liberty, i. 97; Mill on, 251-2, 276, 277; ii. 1 *n.*, 6
Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, i. 238-239, 241 *sqq.*, 251-2, 284
Lincoln College, i. 15 *sqq.*
Literary Gazette, i. 38-41
Liverpool, Lord, i. 146
Liverpool, Morley at, ii. 169-71
Liverpool Post, i. 35
Locke, i. 262-5
Lords, House of, i. 213; ii. 235-6
Lowther, James, ii. 109
Lubbock, Sir John, ii. 45
Lucas, Samuel, i. 155
Lucretianism, i. 308
Lyall, Edna, i. 194
Lytham, i. 42
Lytton, Edward Bulwer, Lord, i. 182
Lytton, R. E., Lord, i. 196, 197; ii. 16, 65, 72, 83

Macaulay, i. 27; ii. 9
Macmillan, Alexander, ii. 178
Macmillans, i. 59
Macmillan's Magazine, ii. 174, 178-81
Maistre, Joseph de, i. 124-7
Majorities, government by, i. 129
Majuba, ii. 103
Mallet, Sir Louis, ii. 111
Manchester School, i. 25, 26, 134, 154
Mark Twain, i. 117
Materialism, i. 73
Maxse, Captain, i. 43, 70, 252, 253, 287, 297; ii. 53, 77
Meredith, George, i. 40, 43, 44, 69-71, 166-8; ii. 12, 14, 51-2
Metaphysical Society, ii. 7, 56
Metaphysics, i. 222
Middlemarch, i. 221, 224-5
'Middles' for *Saturday Review*, i. 45, 47
Militarism, i. 166-7, 178 *sqq.*
Mill, James, i. 311, 314; ii. 126-8
Mill, John Stuart, i. 22, 29, 49 *sqq.*; his disciples at Blackheath, 53; defeated at Westminster, 147, 166-71, 177-9, 212; visits Pitfield, 236-8; death of, 246, 249, 250; his posthumous book on religion, 363 *sqq.*; ii. 211-12, 255, 258
Minority Representation, ii. 21, 22, 206-7
Milton, John, i. 229
Modern Characteristics, i. 47-9
Monarchy, i. 216 *sqq.*; ii. 236-7
Morison, J. Cotter, i. 16, 20-22, 63, 166, 206, 223, 290
Morley, Edward, i. 7
Morley, Grace, i. 8, 193, 218; ii. 55
Morley, Guy, i. 8; ii. 55, 57, 229
Morley, John, i.: birth, 4; boyhood and schooling, 7 *sqq.*; at Oxford, 15 *sqq.*; journalist in London, 33 *sqq.*; edits *Literary Gazette*, 38; joins staff of *Leader*, 41; removes to Temple, 42; *Saturday Reviewer*, 45 *sqq.*; lectures on Darwin and on American Civil War, 42; meets J. S. Mill, 52; marries Rose Ayling, 60; appointed editor of *Fortnightly Review*, 63; visit to United States, 119 *sqq.*; lectures on Ireland, 127; contests Blackburn, 149-53; his French studies, 161-2; rents Flexford House, 163; as letter writer, 177; removes to Pitfield House, 193; visits Carlyle, 226; removes to

Tunbridge Wells, 231; publishes *Rousseau*, 235, 253; meets Gambetta and Renan, 236; writes on Mill's death, 249; publishes book on *National Education*, 270; visits Chamberlain at Birmingham (July 1873), 276; his writings on religion, 304 *sqq.*; ii.: joins Liberation Society, 1; elected to Metaphysical Society, 7; visits Italy, 30 *sqq.*; travels in Austria with Chamberlain, 52-53; plans English Men of Letters Series, 56; removes to Putney Heath, 74; candidate for Westminster, 85 *sqq.*; editor of *Pall Mall Gazette*, 90 *sqq.*; stands for Newcastle, 152; elected, 163; re-elected to Newcastle, 267; removes to Elm Park Gardens, 276
Morley, Dr. Jonathan, i. 7, 20, 42
Morley, Rose, i. 60, 211, 231, 237-238; ii. 229
Morning Star, the, i. 154-7
Morris, William, i. 28
Mozart, i. 227
Mundella, A. J., i. 299
Munro, J. A. R., i. 15
Mytholmroyd, i. 7

Napoleon, i. 108
Napoleon, the Third, i. 113-14, 164-168, 219; ii. 79
Napoleon, Prince Louis, ii. 71, 79
National Councils, ii. 243, 275
Natural rights, ii. 210-12
Nature, i. 313 *sqq.*
Nature, state of, i. 260 *sqq.*
New Forest, ii. 58
New ideas, i. 50-52
New Zealand, i. 128
Newcastle, ii. 86, 137 *sqq.*, 162-3, 171-2, 176-8
Newcastle Chronicle, ii. 141
Newman, Cardinal, ii. 17, 81
Nonconformist revolt, i, 270, 300
Nonconformity, i. 271, 275, 307
Non-Intervention, ii. 212
Northcote, Sir Stafford (Lord Iddesleigh), ii. 215, 227, 251
Novels, use of, i. 56

O'Connell, Daniel, i. 134; saying of, ii. 40
Olmsted, F. L., i. 120
Opportunism, ii. 266
Oriel Fathers, i. 18
Overton, J. H., i. 24, 25
Oxford, ii. 54, 265
Oxford Union Society, i. 22, 23, 24

Paine, Tom, i. 111
Pall Mall Gazette, i. 66, 183, 187; ii. 90 *sqq.*
Palmerston, Lord, i. 25, 138; ii. 64
Paris, fall of, i. 167
Paris Commune, i. 176 *sqq.*, 181
Parnell, Charles S., ii. 80, 110, 118, 122-3, 219, 246, 249, 268 *sqq.*
Pater, Walter, i. 240
Patriotism, ii. 68
Pattison, Mark, i. 18-20
Paul, Herbert, i. 36
Peace, i. 97
"Peace with Honour", ii. 48, 49
Perfectibility, i. 182
Perpetual Peace, Rousseau's essay on, i. 261
Philistine, i. 239
Phœnix Park murders, ii. 124
Pirate Empire, ii. 71
Pitfield House, i. 193-4, 227, 236, 368; ii. 53-4
Pitt, i. 101
Plato, i. 322
Plevna, ii. 42-3
Political Economy Club, i. 180
Politics, Science of, i. 93-4
Positivism, i. 72, 191 *sqq.*, 301
Positivist Calendar, i. 225, 226
Positivists. *See* Wadham
Potter, J. G., i. 148-52
Preston, i. 133
Priestley, Joseph, ii. 3
Protection (*see* Fair Trade), ii. 245, 264-5
Pusey, ii. 128

Radicalism (in the 'sixties), i. 134
Radical Group, ii. 15, 45
Radical Programme (Chamberlain's), i. 280 *sqq.*; ii. 231 *sqq.*
Radical Programme, The, ii. 224, 227, 231-3
Radicals, Philosophic, i. 53, 85
Ramsgate, ii. 125-6
Ransom, doctrine of, ii. 210-11
Rationalism (Morley's), i. 310
Reformation, the Protestant, i. 106-7
Reid, T. Wemyss, i. 36

Religion, supernatural, i. 303 *sqq.*; Morley's definition of, i. 320; ii. 162
Republicanism, i. 67, 212 *sqq.*, 252, 267; ii. 37-8 (at Newcastle), 142
Reviewers, impertinence of, i. 241
Robespierre, ii. 13, 14, 28, 29
Rochdale, ii. 119
Roebuck, i. 296
Rome, ii. 31-3
Rosebery, Lord, ii. 200, 202, 213, 257
Rousseau, i. 110, 117, 212-14, 219 *sqq.*, 228, 234 *sqq.*, 253 *sqq.*, 323
Royal Titles Bill, ii. 37, 146
Ruskin, i. 28
Russell, Earl, i. 138
Russell, Edward, i. 35
Russia, i. 169, 178; ii. 41 *sqq.*, 97, 221, 224
Russophobia, ii. 40

Salisbury, Lord. *See* Cecil
Sand, George, i. 214, 220, 221
Saturday Review, i. 29-31, 38, 44 *sqq.*
Scotch-Irish, i. 121
Sedan, i. 165-6
Seeley, John, ii. 180-81
Sermon on the Mount, i. 75
Servia, ii. 27-8
Shaw-Lefevre, George, ii. 207, 213
Shelley, i. 35
Sherman, General, i. 119
Signed articles, i. 59, 65, 79
Smith, Adam, i. 32, 88, 101, 105; ii. 10, 11, 73
Smith, George, i. 66; ii. 90-91
Smith, Goldwin, i. 46, 213, 289; ii. 49, 50
Social Contract, i. 260, 263-5
Socialism, ii. 234
Soudan, ii. 190 *sqq.*
South Africa, ii. 166-7. *See* Transvaal *and* Zulu War
Sovereignty of the People, i. 115
Spectator, the, ii. 43
Spencer, Herbert, i. 41, 53, 85
Sphinxes, the Two, ii. 114-15
Staple Inn, i. 33
Stead, W. T., ii. 92 *sqq.*, 105, 229
Stephen, James Fitzjames, i. 46, 238-9, 241 *sqq.*, 250-51, 277, 284
Stephen, Leslie, i. 45, 46, 85, 86, 165-6
Stephenson, George, ii. 139
Strikes, ii. 50-51
Style, i. 71, 88, 126, 240, 250, 258
Suez Canal Shares, ii. 37
Sumner, Charles, i. 119, 145
Surrey, i. 163, 193-4
Swinburne, Algernon, i. 28, 68, 70, 219
Sybel, Von, i. 291

Tammany Hall, i. 121
Tariff Reform, ii. 186-7
Tennyson, i. 246
Thiers, i. 225, 292
Thompson, Henry Yates, ii. 91
"Three acres and a cow", ii. 131, 231, 258, 268
Thrift, i. 48
Titles, ii. 63
Toland, John, i. 95
Toleration, religious, i. 96
Trade depression (and war), ii. 50-51; (in 1884), 186
Trade Unions, ii. 23, 42
Trade Union Law, i. 230-32
Traill, H. D., ii. 74
Transvaal, ii. 98, 167
Treaties, commercial, ii. 106-7
Trevelyan, Sir George, i. 69; ii. 9, 124, 203, 226
Trollope, Anthony, i. 63 *sqq.*
Truth, i. 67
Tunbridge Wells, i. 231, 249, 251; ii. 1, 4
Turgot, i. 161-2, 298
Turkish problem, ii. 25 *sqq.*, 147 *sqq.*

Ultramontanism, i. 99, 125, 280
Unearned increment, ii. 239
Union, Irish, i. 100
University College, i. 11
Unknowable, the, i. 326
Utilitarianism, i. 74-6
Utilitarians, i. 32

Vaughan, Charles E., i. 257, 260 *n.*
Vaux, Clotilde de, i. 200, 206
Victoria, Queen, ii. 71 *n.*, 107
Voltaire, i. 109-10, 196, 197 *sqq.*, 211, 323-4

Wadham Positivists, i. 18, 21, 68, 72, 85
Wales, Prince of, ii. 224
Wallace, Mackenzie, ii. 41
War (Franco-German), i. 163 *sqq.*; (effect on trade), ii. 50-51, 64
Ward, Mrs. Humphry, ii. 178-80

Watson, Aaron, ii. 142, 145
Watson, Robert Spence, ii. 142, 146, 148, 151 *sqq.*, 163, 165 *sqq.*, 221, 256-7
Wellington, Duke of, ii. 45
Wesley, John, i. 18, 48
Wesley, Samuel, i. 49
Westminster, ii. 15 ; election, 87-8
Westminster Review, i. 85
Wharton, C. N., ii. 160
Whigs, ii. 19
Whitman, Walt, i. 120
Wight, Isle of, i. 290
Willes, Justice, i. 148-9
Windsor Castle, i. 252
Wolseley, Lord, ii. 214
Woman's Suffrage, ii. 255-6
Women, emancipation of, i. 76, 77 ; ii. 255
Wordsworth, i. 325

Zulu War, ii. 65 *sqq.*, 75-6

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